The Ninth Biannual Conference of the Finnish Society for the Study of English

**FINSSE-9:**
The Opportunities and Challenges of Interdisciplinarity

15–16 August, 2019
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*Book of Abstracts*
Welcome to FINSSE-9 at Tampere!

On behalf of the organising committee we would like to welcome you to the 9th conference of the Finnish Society for the Study of English, held in Tampere on the 15th and 16th of August, 2019. The theme of FINSSE-9 is *The Opportunities and Challenges of Interdisciplinarity*. We hope you will enjoy the conference.

This booklet contains the abstracts in alphabetical order. If you have any further queries do not hesitate to approach the organisers.

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Tieteellisten seurain valtuuskunta
As an American writer of Indo-Bengali origin, Bharati Mukherjee (1940-2017) inherited the loss of her thrice-divided homeland Bengal already at birth, only to relinquish it again in migrating to North America. Bengal continued to have a firm presence in Mukherjee’s texts, despite her resistance to categorization and preference to be recognized simply as an American writer.

My doctoral dissertation explores the various forms and functions of the literary double in the works of three contemporary Indian American writers: Chitra Divakaruni, Jhumpa Lahiri and Bharati Mukherjee. I seek reasons for the frequent recurrence of character doubles in this particular genre, with the premise that they reflect the hybrid and/or divided position of the writers and their characters.

The social-realist approach has been prevalent in postcolonial literary criticism, but much of the sociopolitical dissonance experienced by ethnic minorities in the United States, for example, racism and a sense of displacement, is suffered at the level of the unconscious. New ways of reading minority narratives can unravel these intricacies that purely materialist approaches neglect, including tropes such as the double. In addition to postcolonial cultural theory, for example, Homi Bhabha’s concepts of hybridity and ambivalence, and Stuart Hall’s views of cultural identity as positioning, my work adopts ideas from Judith Butler’s gender theory. I discuss the relationship of the gothic and the postcolonial with the help of David Punter’s writing, and draw from Elleke Boehmer’s work on postcolonial women writers. In studying the inter-relatedness of the English language and identity in postcolonial contexts, I have employed ideas introduced by linguists Alastair Pennycook and Robert Phillipson.

The double is not only a literary trope, but a larger cultural construct, and always reflective of its era. Studying the double requires a wide interdisciplinary approach, and thus my research combines literary criticism, cultural and gender theory, as well as sociolinguistics. Herein lies the challenge as well, as a variety of interdisciplinary approaches may lead to overgeneralization or contradictory conclusions.
Writing Violence in J.M Coetzee’s *Dusklands: A Postcolonial Approach*

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The two novellas in *Dusklands*, “The Vietnam Project” and “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee” have baffled many readers, as the first text deals with the Vietnam War and second one deals with the diary of Jacobus Coetzee, an elephant hunter who travels deep into mainland South Africa and commits mass murder. Some critics have argued that the two texts are separate and do not constitute a whole novel. However, I read the two novellas in the line of each other. Demonstrating that Jacobus stands for the Dutch colonizers, I argue that the two novellas depict imperial violence. In so doing, *Dusklands* aims to relieve human beings form the scourge of war and to promote peace. Coetzee’s aim for promoting peace and removing violence from society is illustrated in some of his interviews and speeches, namely his Jerusalem Award acceptance speech. I argue that the fact that imperial violence happens during two different eras and in two different geographical locations suggests that such violence is not confined to a specific time or place, rather, it can pose a threat in the modern era as well. We see that after the Vietnam War time and again, world powers, namely the US and its allies, have attacked other countries. During these military interventions, the authorities have claimed that they have targeted the enemy. Manifestations of such claims are reflected in *Dusklands* as well. However, as the novel suggests, civilians are mostly affected if any war happens. By showing the readers the grave consequences of war on ordinary people, the novel aims to encourage people to take action against authorities’ decisions to intervene in other countries militarily and to challenge such decisions. We see that in the case of the Vietnam War, under the pressure of the public, the US authorities felt obliged to end the war.
Individual studies from anthropology, geography and Maori history have recently started to examine the city’s role as a place of decolonisation for the Maori in New Zealand. Literary criticism however, which traditionally foregrounds the meaning of the rural homeland for the pursuit of Maori autonomy, still lacks a concise study of that perspective. Moreover, the topic of urban decolonisation among the Maori has not yet been integrated into a postcolonial framework, although postcolonialism has likewise focused on the city as a place of decolonisation for the past eight years. This dissertation is therefore intended to develop a new interdisciplinary method for reading the city in Maori literature, which will stimulate an urban (re-)interpretation of Maori fiction since the 1980s. The new method simultaneously comprises elements of urban research, indigenous studies, and postcolonialism. From an urban perspective, it questions the overall assumption that the massive urban migration among the Maori historically represented a backlash for the pursuit of Maori autonomy in New Zealand. Instead, the study focuses on the Maori’s hybrid appropriation of urban social and administrative structures as a means of decolonisation. As such, it deconstructs persistent colonial stereotypes about indigenous people as being “inauthentic”, “vanishing”, or inherent environmentalists. Finally, the research intends to integrate indigenous Maori studies into postcolonialism as an academic discipline in which indigenous issues remain underrepresented to the present day.
Regional Variation in Speech Rate in American English from YouTube Videos

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Features pertaining to the temporal organization of speech such as speaking rate, articulation rate, or pause duration can vary in American English according to dialect or speaker location (Jacewicz et al. 2009, Kendall 2013), but previous studies have mostly not analyzed samples with geographic granularity sufficient for generalizations about regional differences within the United States.

In this study, a corpus of transcripts of spoken American English compiled from more than 29,000 hours of video from YouTube (Coats 2019), mainly of meetings of local government or civic organizations in all 50 states, is used to analyze regional differences in articulation rate. The principal finding confirms a popular conception: speakers from the South articulate slower than average, and speakers from the Upper Midwest more quickly. The study also introduces several methodological innovations: First, a new method for (semi-) automatic corpus compilation from publicly-available YouTube video transcripts is presented. Second, a method is introduced for the calculation of articulation rate using cue and word timestamps from captions files. Third, spatial autocorrelation analysis, used successfully in recent studies of regional variation in written American English (e.g. Grieve 2016), is undertaken for the study of prosodic variation. Finally, a method for mapping and interactive visualization of articulation rate differences is introduced.

References


Materiality of audiovisual texts: Film dubbing and subtitling within the formal constraints of a material text

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This study utilises the concept of materiality – the view that a text is predominantly a material entity, and its formal and material structures both contribute to its overall meaning (Littau 2016, Gumbrecht 2004) – to deconstruct the translation process and to re-evaluate the relationship between the source text (ST) and target text (TT). As Karin Littau (2016) has stated, traditional conceptions of translation are permeated with the view that “form” and “meaning” are diametrically opposed concepts. The material approach refutes this by proposing that meaning is inseparable from form and form is inseparable from matter.

I contrast these principles of materiality with Anthony Pym’s (2004) concept of material distribution. ST is redefined as the cultural, material, and textual input of the translation process, whereas TT is seen as language content produced into a new material and cultural context. The translation output cannot exist alone, but only as part of a larger material text. All translation is therefore intersemiotic and multimodal: transformation of cultural and material meanings into language, which must conform to certain formal and cultural demands within a multi-faceted material text.

I demonstrate practical uses for these concepts by applying them to the study of audiovisual translation. I equate the formal constraints imposed on TT by screen time, speech rhythm, and other concerns with the material framework surrounding the linguistic translation output. The adaptation of ST’s cultural content is likewise analysed in terms of demands imposed on TT by its new cultural context and the original audiovisual content. I illustrate these ideas with examples from Finnish subtitled and dubbed versions of an English-language film.

My study shows how reconceptualising texts as material entities calls many of translation theory’s prevalent dichotomies into question. Building on the materiality of texts can therefore lead translation studies to new theoretical approaches and research methods.

References

Why do Finns post in English on Instagram? Examining the effect of location on language choice in geotagged social media content

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Many social media platforms allow associating user-generated content with physical locations. This process, known as geotagging, can be used to study to what extent the physical location associated with a post affects language choice on social media platforms. In this presentation, I discuss language choices among Finnish users on Instagram, a popular photo-sharing service, and more specifically, in the captions of photographs geotagged to the Senate Square, a culturally-valued landmark and tourist destination in downtown Helsinki, between 2013 and 2018 (Hiippala et al. 2018).

We examine users’ location histories to identify users based in Finland and automatically identify the languages used in the posts on sentence level (n = 23127). The results reveal a split preference between Finnish (n = 10691) and English (n = 10629), which together cover the vast majority of the sentences posted from the Senate Square. This result reflects the status of the English language in Finland and among the youth (Leppänen et al. 2011). To interrogate what motivates the choice between English and Finnish, we use logistic regression to model how time of day, season and location-specific content affect language choice.

References


Rhetorical strategies as vehicles of ideology in political economic discourse

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Language has always played a crucial role in politics, but lately its significance has increased even further due to the mediatization of politics, among other things. Consequently, political actors are more likely to pay closer attention to language than before. Furthermore, academics in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) have long asserted that political discourse is one of the most important tools of ideological power, making it an important subject of study.

In the first article of my doctoral dissertation I examine linguistic manifestations of ideological power in political economic discourse. Using a CDA approach, complemented with previous work in the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics, I study what the use of rhetorical strategies may convey about politicians' stances towards economic policy, as well as their political identities.

I employ a qualitative research method supported by quantitative data generated through concordance analysis. The data for this study consists of six political debates held in the United Kingdom between 2010 and 2017, totaling approximately 60,000 words. The primary focus in this article is the use of modals, passives, and nominalization in a political economic context. Analysis of the debates indicates that there are distinguishable differences between individual politicians, for example in how passives and nominalization are utilized to mitigate agency.

The study sheds light on how political ideologies and power operate through actual instances and patterns of language use. The results of this study could have multidisciplinary relevance in e.g. social and political studies, and could be applied to analyzing political discourse in other political contexts and language settings as well.
Mining Metaphors of the Night in British Literature

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The presentation approaches interdisciplinarity in the study of English from an empirical literary studies perspective. My study is situated in the rapidly growing field of digital humanities (digital literary studies), in the intersection between literary and linguistic research. It trains its focus on literature with linguistic, specifically corpus linguistic, methods. It analyses big data, which already plays a key part in linguistics but still a rather marginal topic in literary studies.

My research material consists of some 8000 literary full texts from 1500 to 1920’s. My research looks at what kinds of semantic and metaphorical meanings structure the literary depictions of the night at town, the urban night, during a historical period when both urbanization and “nocturnalization” (people staying up after sundown) were among the major societal trends.

The big data approach to literary studies poses unique challenges as it is not suited for traditional literary methodology. Such research is, therefore, fundamentally interdisciplinary. The approach has, however, the potential to reveal something about historical literary trends, themes, and the societal situations which gave rise to these, on a scale that is unattainable with more traditional methods.

The presentation will cover the identification of metaphors in corpus material using semantic tagging. It will also take a look at how text mining methods can help focus the researcher’s attention on the most salient and unique features of a literary theme in historical data.
Virginia Woolf and Henri Cartier-Bresson shared an interest in the moment, which photographer Cartier-Bresson called the decisive moment. In Woolf’s Modernist novels *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the decisive moments are epiphanies experienced by the protagonists. The aim of the present article is to discuss similarities and differences in Cartier-Bresson’s and Woolf’s decisive moments. The analysis is inspired by Cartier-Bresson’s writings on photography, in particular, *The Mind’s Eye*. Through a reading of Cartier-Bresson’s photographs of the 1930s and Woolf’s Modernist novels several parallels are discovered. An essential finding is the fact that both Cartier-Bresson and Woolf could be called Surrealists on a deeper philosophical level. Their work with the elements of surprise and magic in everyday life marks a break in the conventional way of seeing things. In the present article Cartier-Bresson’s decisive moment and Woolf’s epiphany are essentially interpreted as aesthetic issues.
Translating and subtitling musical songs: a functional perspective

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In this presentation, I examine the features of musical subtitles and compare them with a singable stage translation. I look at the material from a functional point of view where the translation, and the source text, has a purpose, which it needs to fill. To study the material, I have created a Heptathlon Principle based on The Pentathlon Principle by Peter Low (2003), to which I have added two characteristics. Low’s principle consists of Singability, Sense, Naturalness, Rhythm and Rhyme. I study Low’s Sense with the categorization presented by Johan Franzon where translations are divided into three groups: direct translations, paraphrases and rewritings (Franzon 2009, 186). Low’s principle can be used to study the features of singable song translations, but when it comes to musicals, other matters must also be considered. In musicals, the visual content and the function of the song within the story affect the translations, as Franzon (2009) points out. Therefore, I have adapted Low’s principle by adding these two features, the visual content, and the function of the song, to the principle so that it can be applied to musical translations.

Before investigating the material in detail, I presumed that film subtitles follow the sense in the source text more precisely than stage translations, since subtitlers can focus more on the contents of the song, while stage translators have to pay attention to the singability of the stage translation. I also wanted to examine whether the subtitles have less poetic features than the stage translation. I discovered that subtitles are mostly closer to the semantical contents of the source text than the stage translation, but they still have many poetic features. Sometimes, however, even subtitles can be rewritten if this is necessary for the function of the song.

References

Picturebook illustrations as a part of translation input

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Children’s picturebooks convey stories by combining two different narratives, the verbal and the visual. Pantaleo (2014, 15) defines picturebooks as stories in which “the total effect depends on the text, the illustrations, and the reciprocity between these two sign systems.” In order to maintain the esthetic appeal of the original picturebook, the interaction of the two sign systems should be taken into account when translating picturebooks from one language and cultural context to another: ideally, the translation output communicates with the illustrations with the same reciprocity as the original verbal text (Oittinen, Ketola & Garavini 2018, 51). What this would mean in practice is that – contrary to the traditional view of translation as purely verbal activity (e.g. O’Sullivan 2013, 6; Kaindl 2013, 266) – the translator analyzes both verbal and visual information and creates translation solutions that adhere to both. Illustrations, in other words, constitute a part of the translation input. In this presentation, I aim to demonstrate this with empirical examples.

The data of the presentation consists of three picturebooks authored by the renowned picturebook author Margaret Wise Brown: The Color Kittens (1949), Mister Dog (1951) and The Sailor Dog (1952), and their Finnish translations. I analyze the data for notable textual changes that have taken place during translation and compare these to the visual dimension of the source text, the picturebook illustrations. My analysis aims to show that the picturebook illustrations have guided the translators’ solutions. The illustrations may both impose constraints on the translation but also serve as inspiration for highly creative translation solutions. The presentation also emphasizes the need for interdisciplinarity in multimodally-oriented translation research: the translational inquiry of multimodal material requires the integration of theoretical and empirical approaches that are focused on increasing our understanding of how other modes interact with verbal information.

References

Translated science fiction forms the majority of the Finnish science fiction genre in its literary mode and especially in its audiovisual mode. It can therefore be assumed that the roots of the science fiction genre in Finland are in translated science fiction and the genre specific elements of science fiction must have been transferred to the Finnish tradition of the genre as well. As a popular culture genre, science fiction is present both in literature and in the audiovisual media. Through its (relatively) short existence as a literary genre, it has attracted the attention of genre theorists, who have all given their best in defining the genre. The seminal definition by Darko Suvin (1979) has, however, remained as a reference and starting point for these definitions. Suvin’s idea of a genre specific element, the ‘novum’, as a vehicle of science fiction’s ‘cognitive estrangement’ is the reference point of this study as well. The novum is the cognitively estranging new narrative element, which forms the voice of the science fiction genre and its existence is vital for the narrative to be considered as science fiction.

From linguistic point of view, the novum itself is seen to manifest its cognitive estrangement through fictive neology, i.e. neologisms and neosemes, which again are the voice of the novum, the *Sonus Novi*. This is true for the audiovisual mode of the genre as well. The spectacular visual dimension of the audiovisual media is not enough to produce the cognition for the spectacular estrangement. This is especially true in the so called “space opera”, in which this spectacular visual dimension often gives way to the dialogue. This puts more weight on the content of the dialogue, in which neology is once again the voice of the novum. The neologies hence support the visual dimension by making its estrangement cognitive (understandable and plausible). This presentation introduces the term ‘generic fluency’ in evaluating the state at which the novum as the genre specific element has remained cognitively estranging through neology in the Finnish DVD-subtitles of the contemporary tv-series *Stargate Atlantis, Star Trek Enterprise, Star Trek Discovery* and *Battlestar Galactica* and in investigating what happens to the genre of science fiction in the translation process. This study is a part of a doctoral research, which focuses on the aforementioned subject in professional audiovisual translation (subtitling), non-professional audiovisual translation (fansubbing) and literary translation.
On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded its small neighbor Kuwait. The events that followed came to be known as the Persian Gulf War. The Persian Gulf War was a media war – both in the efforts the Bush administration took to influence the media and turn U.S. public opinion in favor of U.S. military action, and in the U.S.-led military campaign that was broadcast to the world primarily through U.S. media. President Saddam Hussein of Iraq was a central figure, both as a key political player and the villain in the narrative promoted by the Bush administration to justify military action.

This study investigates the extent to which U.S. newspapers adopted the image of the villainous Iraqi dictator in their war-time reporting and whether this image endured after the war. It focuses on references to the Iraqi president in the reporting of three major U.S. newspapers throughout the early half of 1991. Analyzing terms of reference used for Saddam Hussein, the study asks: To what extent did newspaper reports echo or depart from the Bush administration narrative, or did they report varied and competing discursive representations? Whose representations were reported? Were there differences associated with terms of reference, newspapers, or time periods?

The corpus used in this study covers articles from three U.S. newspapers (The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal), approximately 3.0 million words, and a six-month time period between January and June 1991. The material is analyzed using a combination of corpus linguistic methodology and the tools of systemic-functional linguistics. Initial findings indicate that there are marked differences in the terms of reference used by each newspaper as well as how closely the representations of Saddam Hussein used in the articles align with those promoted by the Bush administration.
Various previous studies have suggested that multilingual settings in which English is used create favorable conditions for linguistic innovations (Blake 1992; Cheshire et al. 2011, Mauranen 2012). The rationale in these arguments is that multilingual settings (and individuals) could be characterized by loose and intermittent social ties. And, according to the social network theory, weak ties tend to promote diffusion of linguistic innovations (Milroy & Milroy 1985). As an illustration, Mauranen (2018: 11) has suggested that weak ties “probably dominate” in present-day English as a lingua franca (ELF) communication. However, very little empirical evidence of networks has been presented, and previous studies have only assumed the presence of weak ties in multilingual settings.

This presentation puts the claim to test and investigates network sizes and types in real-time social media data in which ELF is used. It reports the results presented in Laitinen & Lundberg (in press), which utilizes freely-available big data from Twitter. Twitter is a digital application that makes it possible to write and post short micro-blogs, re-tweet someone else’s message, or post links (url-addresses) or multimedia content. To measure network sizes, we use two metadata attributes available for each tweet. These attributes measure the number of one’s online friends and followers. Social networks are operationalized as follows: The number of followers indexes truly weak ties (i.e. it requires no action from a user), and the number of friends is an indication of slightly stronger links (i.e. requires user effort). In a previous study, we have suggested that these metadata offer a way of measuring social networks and that they are ideal for research purposes (Laitinen et al. 2017).

The quantitative patterns observed show that multilingual ELF users have a greater number of ties between accounts than monolingual users, and therefore also, most likely, larger social networks in general. The results show that, statistically speaking, social embedding of ELF favors weak ties, innovation, and diffusion of change. Larger network sizes and network types suggest that ELF users could be more likely to act as agents of change than the other account types observed here.

References
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Why discarding short texts might not be a good idea

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From the viewpoint of traditional corpus linguistic methodology, very short texts can be troublesome. For example, when normalizing word counts per 1,000 or 10,000 words as is commonly done, the calculated values tend to be anomalously high. Ideal text length has been discussed for a long time (cf. e.g. Biber 1993), but as texts in most of the traditional genres studied tend to be of reasonable length, it is possible to discard the shortest texts as outliers without affecting the results too much. Furthermore, many traditional corpora contain text samples close to a specific length, such as 2000 words in the BROWN corpus (Francis and Kučera 1964).

However, with modern computer-mediated communication, the situation is different. Most instant messages and social media posts tend to be very short. For example, 50% of comments on the social media platform Reddit are under 20 words long, and comments shorter than 100 tokens cover over 90% of all comments. By discarding the shortest texts, we run the risk of discarding linguistic variation present in most of the texts in the data. There is also a similar danger with combining shorter texts into longer texts: if shorter and longer texts differ linguistically, the combined texts may not pattern as expected.

In this paper, I will use statistical and computational methodology such as pooling and resampling methods to study how very short Reddit comments differ linguistically from longer comments. For example, preliminary results based on Reddit data indicate that compared to longer comments, shorter comments tend to contain more first-person pronouns. I will argue that longer and shorter texts differ in their linguistic makeup, that it is important to also include the shortest texts in the data, and that simply combining texts might not be enough to get around the problem.

References

Curvy girls and fat bitches: A corpus-linguistic approach to identity and the body in plus-size fashion blogs

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In my paper, I present the results of a corpus-linguistic study of body descriptors in plus-size fashion blogs. As a part of my doctoral dissertation (see also Limatius 2016; 2017), the study looks at a variety of body descriptors and their frequencies in a corpus of 4.2 million words that was compiled from UK-based plus-size fashion blogs. I explore the ways in which different terms for describing a plus-size woman’s body are used by plus-size fashion bloggers, as well as the readers who comment on these blogs.

Keeping with the theme of the conference, my work has interdisciplinary aspects. The theoretical framework of my research is partly based on fat studies (e.g. LeBesco 2004; Harjunen 2009), a field that has its roots in gender studies and sociology. My study offers a new perspective to this field by applying corpus-linguistic methods to quantitative, textual data.

Previous research has highlighted the reappropriated use of the word “fat” in the discourse of plus-size fashion blogs (cf. Harju & Huovinen 2015; Scaraboto & Fischer 2013). In my presentation, I illustrate the linguistic and discursive variety within this genre of blogs; while “fat” certainly is a popular descriptor in the corpus, the results of my analysis show that many bloggers prefer to use other terms, such as “plus-size”. “Fat” also appears to be more common among bloggers whose blogs focus on fat acceptance activism. By exploring the variation in the use of body descriptors, my research provides a new approach to the discussion on fatness, identity and terminology.

References

Multilingualism and war: the case of the Boer Wars

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This paper deals with multilingual practices in texts related to war. The case study concerns the First and Second Boer Wars (1880–1881 and 1899–1902 respectively). The data are drawn from the English language materials dealing with the wars available in the Project Gutenberg files. They consist of both personal memoirs, diaries and letters as well as history writing and official documents. The study concerns the use of languages beyond English in these texts. While the general hypothesis is that individual writers will reflect the general trends in multilingual practices evident in other English texts of the time (see e.g. Nurmi et al. 2018), of particular interest are the languages tied to the specific location. On the one hand, it will be explored how far Africans speaking e.g. Khoisan languages are linguistically represented in these texts. On the other hand, this study will explore how far – if at all – the enemy of the British are made visible in words or phrases of their own language.

Reference

This paper examines the role and representation of trauma and justice in the context of Mediterranean mobility and forced migration in the recent novel *The Spice Box Letters* (2015) by the Cypriot British writer Eve Makis. Set in 1915 and 1985, the novel is concerned with the Armenian genocide of 1915 and follows its effects with particular focus on the refugee experience, displacement, trauma, and justice. Through the narrative of its protagonist, British-born Katerina and her search for lost family history and ethnic identity in Cyprus, *The Spice Box Letters* shows an attempt to engage with the silenced story of her late grandmother, accessible only through letters and a diary written in Armenian and thus inaccessible. As the novel gradually reveals, the traumatizing effects of the genocide are central to survivors of the genocide, living in diaspora in the United States, Britain, and Cyprus, but with no contact with each other. My reading of the novel follows Michael Rothberg’s theorization of trauma representation as presented in *Traumatic Realism* (2000) that takes into account both the trauma and post-trauma as generational responses to the original event and their different representation – shown in the novel through the grandmother’s diary and the granddaugher’s story. By including both narratives by witnesses as well as those by other family members living in diaspora, Makis’s novel addresses the multigenerational character of the traumatic experience and the resultant displacement, representing it in a register of pain, silence, and affect. What I will suggest is that Makis’s novel is an attempt to uncover silenced histories of injustice and thus contributes to an ethical representation of cultural and individual trauma.

References

Metaphors separating the United Kingdom from the EU in British parliamentary debates from 2000 to 2016

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In political discourse, the UK’s role in the European Union has been represented in two opposing ways: the first type represents the UK as a leader “at the heart of Europe” (Gibbins 2014; Musolff 2017), while in the second type the UK is constructed as somehow separate from the rest in the Union (Wodak 2016). In British parliamentary debates, in particular, the identity of a leader has mostly been constructed by the speakers of the party in government, while the speakers in opposition have portrayed the UK as an isolated member that is insecure of its role in the EU (Riihimäki 2019).

The paper focuses on metaphors used in British parliamentary debates to talk about issues concerning the EU. I analyse speeches by three Eurosceptic speakers (William Cash, Kate Hoey and Kelvin Hopkins) and by three speakers that have mostly been pro-EU (Gordon Brown, David Cameron and Theresa May) from the time period from January 2000 up to the EU referendum in 2016. The approach that I adopted is that of critical metaphor analysis and I use corpus-assisted methods of analysis (see Charteris-Black 2004). The paper focuses on similarities and differences between the speakers in how they use metaphors 1) to argue for or against the EU and 2) to describe the UK’s role in the Union. The results suggest that both sides represent the EU as an entity that is constantly moving forward, and the UK is either one of the drivers or merely a passenger on the journey. Furthermore, especially Cameron and Cash talk about the EU as a place where the British representatives go and fight for British interests. Many of the metaphors represent the EU as being separate from the UK, and as something that can be evaluated from the outside as being either beneficial or a threat.

References

European University Institute Working Papers.
Trains, Interrupted: 1930s Crime Fiction, Transcontinental Trajectories and the Disintegration of Europe

Riquet, Johannes
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This paper is part of a larger project on the poetics of interruption in British railroad fiction in which I trace a cultural history of the railway journey in literature, cinema and the visual arts as a multisensory and specifically modern experience of multiple accidents, interruptions and interferences. My research responds to Wolfgang Schivelbusch’s classic account of the railway journey as the epitome of Newtonian space and time; drawing on recent accounts of the fictional railroad by scholars like Matthew Beaumont and Laura Marcus, I intend to complement Schivelbusch’s account by foregrounding the potential of the train to disrupt (rather than regularise) spatio-temporal orders. The present paper addresses the significance of spatial, narrative and perceptual interruptions in the politically charged railway crime fiction and cinema of the interwar era. I will draw on three examples: Agatha Christie’s *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934), Ethel Lina White’s *The Wheel Spins* (1936), and the cinematic adaptation of the latter by Alfred Hitchcock, *The Lady Vanishes* (1938).

All of these narratives revolve around transcontinental railway journeys that offer an oblique comment on the disintegration of Europe in a pre-WWII climate. The various interruptions and disruptions that mark these journeys provoke reflection on Europe’s failure to consolidate its spatial order. In *Murder on the Orient Express*, the Orient Express, whose trajectory through Europe had been of considerable geopolitical significance since World War I, is caught in a snowdrift in Yugoslavia, between East and West, failing to function as an unproblematic long arm of the European empires. In *The Wheel Spins* and *The Lady Vanishes*, the interruptions of the train journey and a multiplicity of perceptual uncertainties within the space of the train also figure a Europe that fails to function as a connected space. *The Lady Vanishes* radicalises the critique already present in White’s novel in the most spectacular interruption of the journey: as the train stops in a forest, the genre of the film changes abruptly and suggests the possibility of war, indirectly advocating British intervention. All of my examples, then, interrupt their railway journeys to reflect on Britain’s position within (or without) a disintegrating Europe.
El Capitan as a Site for Male Healing from Trauma in Jeff Long’s *The Wall* and Tommy Caldwell’s *The Push*

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Nature and mountains are often represented as places of healing in literature and the media, especially for white, healthy, and middleclass men. However, discussions on nature and gender in relation to trauma are rare, and a specific discussion on the representation of male mountain climbers’ traumas is missing. In this presentation, we are interested in how nature, particularly the famous mountain El Capitan, is represented in Jeff Long’s novel *The Wall* (2006) and Tommy Caldwell’s memoir *The Push* (2017) as a specific spatial location of healing for male rock climbers, who at the same time are both victims of traumatic events and partially responsible for the development of those events. More specifically, this interdisciplinary presentation places ecofeminist and ecological masculinities scholarship in dialog with trauma studies and analyzes these texts with the aim of showing how representations of trauma relate to those of nature and masculinity. In this analysis, questions of how certain aspects of ecological and hegemonic masculinities relate to representing trauma, nature, and masculinity are central, as are issues of perpetrator trauma and the non-generic character of traumatic experience. Ultimately, we show how representations of nature, trauma, and masculinities in the primary texts converge and reflect a plurality of gendered responses to trauma and healing in nature.
My paper deals with the use (non-)sexist language in a second language, more precisely how Finns and Spaniards understand and use non-sexist language in English. This paper will present and compare the results of a questionnaire designed to study whether speakers of languages with different gender systems perceive and use non-sexist language differently. Also, it investigates the traits and the strategies that demonstrate these differences. The interest in sexist language has increased in recent years due to the emerging 4th wave of feminism. Those in favour of the feminist language reform seek to change the language in order to avoid perpetuating gender stereotypes and discrimination (Hellinger & Bußmann, 2010: 18). However, using non-sexist language can be challenging, especially for multilingual speakers, as every language requires different strategies. For example, languages with grammatical gender, such as Spanish, use visualization strategies, which implies making women visible through the systematic and symmetrical making of gender in the language, while languages without grammatical gender, such as English or Finnish, tend to use neutralisation strategies, which consist of using one form to designate people regardless their gender (Pauwels 1998:110-112).

Bibliography

(New) Sincerity and the performance of emotion in Dorothea Lasky’s poetry

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A traditional assumption of poetry readers’ behavior in the face of emotion is that they recognize themselves in the text, identifying or empathizing with it (see e.g. Altieri 2006, 40). On the other hand, poetry is often read and taught with a focus on arriving at a coherent reading for meaning, which can generate uncomfortable feelings in readers (see e.g. Stein 2010, 195). Recent poetry, however, offers more ambiguous positions for readers. The proposed paper will consider, as an example, American poet Dorothea Lasky’s works Rome (2014) and Thunderbird (2012) where she engages with what has been called “New Sincerity” as a performed tension between irony and sincerity. For some decades now, sincerity has been viewed as an undesirable tone in poetry, particularly in its experimental varieties. Lasky, however, embraces an ordinary, naïve and emotional self, inviting readers to observe the performance in its banality.

With some insight from the interdisciplinary field of cognitive literary studies, I argue that Lasky’s poems’ awareness of sincerity as a performance of deliberate naiveté allows her to direct attention to the uncomfortable emotions generated not necessarily by empathy for the predominantly negative emotional experiences presented in the poems, but by the reading experience itself.

Works cited

Flippin’ Grammar: Changing the descriptive grammar course

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BA degrees in English tend to include a descriptive grammar component. At many Finnish universities, including Turku, the model taught at the English Department is a corpus-based description of contemporary English (Biber et al. 2002). Whichever grammatical model is used, it is not unusual that the Intermediate/Subject Studies grammar course is viewed by students as demanding and difficult, even demotivating, although its content has a wider applicability than almost any other course taught at the same level.

Concerned with the learning outcomes of ‘Grammar 2’, we have remodelled the course at Turku this academic year by discontinuing the lectures and changing the format of the exercises and practical classes. This type of reform has gained interdisciplinary support from university pedagogy, highlighting the benefits of the ‘flipped classroom’ (e.g. Flores et al. 2016), also recognised in the media (YLE 2017). In the proposed paper, we will report on the changes in the syllabus and teaching methods, the process of revamping a major course, and the reception of the new format by the students. We also seek to engage colleagues at other Finnish universities in re-evaluating the learning objectives and teaching methods of long-established courses at English departments.

References


Nuclear Fiction: the Parameters of the Phenomenon

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Our living in the energy dependable society reframes not only our values, beliefs and priorities, but also fosters the multidisciplinary debates on energy-related issues beyond sciences and encourages the development of energy-focused researches within humanities and social sciences. While being on the edge of science and humanities, energy humanities reshape the geopolitical and ecological factors of the energy policy at various levels as well as develop new dimensions of energy-related phenomena (e.g. petroculture, nuclear phobia, nuclear identity, energy liberation, plutonium economy) and methodological tools (ecocriticism, nuclear criticism, econarratology etc) to map the energetic history of the humanity.

Among those phenomena is nuclear fiction which appeared as a response to the political, ecological and technological agendas of the Nuclear Anthropocene - the nuclear epoch, referring to the way in which “nuclear fission released man-made radionuclides into the environment through fallout, providing a radiological time-stamp of the start of the nuclear age (Carpenter, 2016; Schuppli, 2017).

My research on literary/cultural dimensions of nuclear energy implications (on the example of the late Cold War’s writing practices) demonstrates that “fabulously textual” (Derrida, 1984) image of “the nuclear” went under transformations by shifting its references from the past (the Atomic bomb literature) and from the future (the apocalyptic fiction) to the present implications (nuclear explosions, uranium mines, nuclear waste management etc). Nuclear fiction (in my case, U.S. fiction on nuclear power plant explosions, - Chernobyl, in particular: Frederik Pohl’s Chernobyl (1987), Andrea White’s Radiant Girl (2008), James Reich’s Bombshell (2013) ) against its Cold War political, technological and ecological background made a real shift of “nuclear narrative” focus – from “nuclear anarchy” to “an operational norm” (according to Schell). And even more – “by making “the nuclear” – from weaponry to energy – an accepted practice (at least, for the nations deemed “responsible enough”).

Based on Morton’s “hyberobject frame”, Nixon;s “slow violence”, Bekhta’s “collective narrative”, Mauch’s “slow hope”, such aspect of researching the parameters of nuclear fiction allows not only to distinguish the multidisciplinary approach to the U.S. literary implementaions of the “Atom for Peace” Initiative but also contributes to the transformations of “nuclear energy” concept within trauma studies, climate change rhetoric, sustainable development studies, technology studies, energy humanities and environmental humanities.
Traditionally, philology has denoted the study of the historical development of language, the structural and semantic relations between languages, and the formal properties of linguistic texts combined with their meanings. Texts have been understood as entities constituted in writing, speech, gestures, and images experienced in different ways and interpreted according to genre and sociocultural convention. In the past, the philologist may have focused, quite literally, on their love of the written word (\textit{philo + logos}) – cataloguing the spellings and significations of the diachronic variants of words. In the present, the philologist readily ventures beyond words, into other ways of presenting, to close read the function and effects of sensory perceptions produced by linguistic presentations. English philology v2.0 seeks to understand the full experience of such works in language, literature, and culture.

However, whereas in the past the philologist may have stayed true to their discipline without undue complication, the new philologist faces the prospect of interdisciplinarity with a degree of uncertainty. As philologist v2.0 taps into the potential of neighbouring disciplines such as literary studies, media research, and cognitive science, the risk is twofold. On the one hand, they might lose sight of the specific disciplinary quality of philology and allow their work to dissolve into the theories and tools of another branch of study. On the other hand, if they refuse to do so, the contribution of philologist v2.0 might not be understood in its proper frame – the migration across disciplinary borders could seem unjustified or opportunistic. Indeed, the foray might turn into an obstacle to career development as the people reading their job and funding applications become convinced that the plan at hand has no solid disciplinary basis.

In my presentation, I will confront this challenge as Docent in English Philology.
The search for a World War II effect: A pattern-driven analysis of parliamentary debates

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Wars and other armed conflicts are periods during which societies undergo prolonged exposure to heightened distress, economic upheaval, demographic shifts, and societal change. Any one of these factors could be expected to affect language in both subtle or substantial ways, and evidence has indeed been found of correlations between periods of war and language change; see, e.g., Raumolin-Brunberg (1998) on pronominal change and the Civil War effect, and Bochkarev et al. (2014) on the rate of lexical change during the Victorian era; see also Barnes (2003) and Dickinson (2011). However, so far most studies of the effects of war on language have been based on relatively small corpora or other types of primary data, and large-scale data-driven analyses are still wanting.

This study adopts a pattern-driven perspective to the potential lexical effects of World War II on British parliamentary debates (see Tyrkkö and Kopaczyk 2018). A mixed-methods approach is used, starting with a quantitative component and followed by qualitative analysis. A word list is created of all unique lexical items from the period 1910 to 1970 in the Hansard corpus (Alexander and Davies 2015–). The unique frequency profiles of all sufficiently frequent items are clustered using the PROC VARCLUS method (SAS Institute 2011, see also Hiltunen et al. 2018), a variable reduction technique that increases parsimony by grouping variables iteratively into clusters according to the first two principle components. The resulting clusters represent the most meaningful diachronic frequency profiles, and the most representative variables of each cluster can be used as proxies for the full cluster. The polynomial equations of each trend curve are then solved for the local maxima and minima in the range 1935-1945, identifying the clusters that show a vertex, or a turning point, during the war years. Given that there is little novelty in observing that there are diachronic fluctuations in topic-specific lexis, the main focus of the qualitative linguistic analysis will be on function words and non-topical items, which will be discussed further in their discursive context.

References


Multilingualism, Digital Dialects and New Methods of Visualising Linguistic Data: The Nordic Tweet Stream Project meets Virtual Reality

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Since the turn of the millennium, social and digital media have become increasingly important spaces for human interaction. Real-world language use is no longer merely reflected in these virtual spaces, but instead new media increasingly serve as sites of innovation for new linguistic practices and discursive conventions. Features of online language use are starting to emerge into written and spoken registers, blurring the lines between them and raising new questions that challenge conventional understandings about regional and language-specific distributions of linguistic features.

In this presentation, we will discuss multilingualism and the use of translanguaging strategies in Nordic tweeting using the geospatial linguistic data of the Nordic Tweet Stream (NTS) project (Laitinen et al 2017a, b). Demonstrating the central role of English in the Nordic twittersphere both as an emerging language and as a high-frequency source language of pragmatically motivated code-switching (Tyrkkö forthcoming), we will argue that the frequency and nature of multilingual and translingual practices in social media reveal that at least in the Nordic countries, English is increasingly seen as a readily available linguistic resource that is assumed to be accessible to interactants and can be used creatively in a “ludic” fashion (Crystal 2011).

Various newborn digital datasets provide primary data at a volume that demands new approaches to data exploration and analysis (Huang et al 2016, Grieve et al 2017). One of the most important of these is explorative data visualization, a central methodology in Digital Humanities. Our paper presents the current state of the ongoing collaborative project between linguists and human-computer interaction specialists in the Digital Humanities research group at the Centre for Data Intensive Sciences and Applications (DISA) at Linnaeus University (Alissandrakis et al 2018). We demonstrate how Virtual Reality (VR) applications can be used to make large linguistic data more approachable and experiential and how they can aid in efficiently finding meaningful patterns in vast streams of data. The VR environment allows an easy overview of any feature in a dataset, thus enhancing visual data exploration considerably.
References:


Introducing the Diachronic Corpus of Political Speeches (DCPS)

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Over the last decade, corpus linguistic methods have been increasingly used in interdisciplinary studies of history, social sciences and political science (see Baker and McEnery 2015, Alasuutari et al 2019). By contrast to the approaches traditionally practiced in Critical Discourse Analysis, corpus methods make it possible to identify significant collocations, phraseological patterns and subtle diachronic trends in large collections of texts (see Tyrkkö 2016, Riihimäki accepted). However, although a number of corpora focused on political discourse (e.g., Hansard corpora, CORPS, CoPS, Europarl) are available, they tend to focus on a particular country, a specific political event type or a restricted time period, and consequently they have limited scope for addressing long-term developments of political discourse or comparing regional and register differences (see Ädel 2010, Kytö 2001, Baker 2012, Cheng 2013, Perrez et al. 2018) In this presentation we introduce the Diachronic Corpus of Political Speeches (DCPS), a corpus specifically designed for investigating such questions.

The DCPS is an extended and annotated version of the current SCPS (Small Corpus of Political Speeches), a collection of 700 full-length political speeches. Compared to the SCPS, the DCPS will be balanced across the time span (1800-present day) and the key variables, and it will be roughly twice the size of SCPS. The DCPS is representative of political speeches in the UK, the US, Canada and Australia, and also includes samples from other English-speaking countries. The speeches represent a wide range of communicative settings and a wide variety of political actors including unelected civic leaders. Contextual information is included in the detailed metadata, audience responses are included when applicable, and morphosyntactic information is provided through lemmatization and part-of-speech tagging performed with TreeTagger. A discourse-pragmatic annotation will also be included in the form of manually added in-line tags, assessed by regular inter-coder reliability checks.
References


