

Workshop

Resistance in Family Language Practices

Resistance has been broadly defined as a response to domination under different forms (Scott 1985). Within the field of family language policy, resistance to social or parental ideologies have been poorly documented until recently. Some studies show children agency and their power to influence family language behaviours (Fogle et King 2013) or the transmission of heritage languages (Canagarajah 2008). Within intergenerational family language practices, when adults try to coerce the youngest members, or make fun of them, these latter may also show a certain resistance (Istanbulu 2017, 386).

This workshop brings together researchers working with multilingual families and building on the notion of resistance within interaction.

Programme

Monday 23 May, 2022

9:30 Welcome coffee

9:45 Workshop opening

10:00 **Suresh Canagarajah**, Pennsylvania State University, USA, asc16@psu.edu

"Enregisterment as Infrapolitics: The Hidden Scripts of Heritage Language Change."

This communication will talk about how the identity of Tamil language and Tamil speakers is gradually changing in the diaspora through subtle sociolinguistic practices.

11:00 **Suat Istanbulu**, INALCO, CNRS-SeDyL Paris, suat.istanbulu@inalco.fr

Resistance during intergenerational language practices in transnational families (Turkey, France, Germany)

I will show how resistance is observed during intergenerational multilingual conversations among transnational families linked to Antioch (South Turkey) and living in France or Germany. After presenting some context and methodology regarding their multilingual language practices (Istanbulu 2017) and based on the analysis of plurilingual corpora (Léglise et Alby 2016), I will focus on the resistance phenomena of children with adults in these families whose members use resources in several languages (Arabic, Turkish, French or German). This happens in the complex socially collaborative process (Luykx 2003) where, in response to adult's behaviours such as insistence, mockery or unfair treatment, children manifest their disagreement. They may refuse to align with their interlocutor, refuse to speak the language that adults encourage them to use, or refuse to communicate and interact. These phenomena of resistance seem to block not only communication, but are also a brake on the practice of the heritage language (Arabic) by the youngest participants.

References:

Fogle, Lyn W., et Kendall A. King. 2013. « Child Agency and Language Policy in Transnational Families ». *Issues in Applied Linguistics* 19: 1-25.

Istanbulu, Suat. 2017. « Pratiques langagières intergénérationnelles : le cas de familles transnationales plurilingues (Antioche, Île-de-France, Berlin) ». Paris: Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales.

Jonsson, Carla. 2014. « Power and resistance: Language mixing in three Chicago plays ». *International Journal of Bilingualism* 18 (2): 118-33.

Léglise, Isabelle, & Sophie Alby. 2016. « Plurilingual corpora and polylinguaging, where corpus linguistics meets contact linguistics ». *Sociolinguistic Studies* 10 (3): 357-81.

Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

12:00 Lunch

14:00 [Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen, University of Bath, UK, xlcc20@bath.ac.uk](#)

“I don’t like to speak Chinese”: Children’s resistance against speaking Chinese at home

Research has established that children and parents in immigrant families tend to have different emotional attachment to their heritage language (Little, 2017; Sevinc & Backus 2019). As a result, children may feel anxious when pressured to speak the heritage language at home or may be reluctant to speak it, some may even resist speaking it at all (Istanbullu 2017). This study focuses on multilingual practices in Chinese immigrant families in the UK. In particular, it explores how children’s attitudes towards speaking Chinese are reflected in their patterns of interaction with family members. Using family language audit as a methodological tool, the study was carried out through observations of the families to collect ‘live’ events that were captured through digital and non-digital communications, including Wechat (Chinese social media app) and recorded family conversations. The data were enriched by retrospective interviews with children on their resistance against speaking Chinese. The findings indicate that the monolingual ideology in the broader society and parental pressures at home strongly influence the children’s preference to not speak Chinese in and outside the home.

References:

Istanbullu, S. 2017. *Pratiques langagières intergénérationnelles : le cas de familles transnationales plurilingues*. PhD thesis, INALCO, Paris.

Little, S. 2017. Whose heritage? What inheritance?: conceptualising family language identities, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 7(2), 1-15.

Sevinç, Y. & Backus, A. 2019. Anxiety, language use and linguistic competence in an immigrant context: a vicious circle?. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 22(6), 706-724

15:00 [General discussion](#)