



# **CITY TALK: URBAN IDENTITIES, MOBILITIES AND TEXTUALITIES**

**University of Bern  
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## WITH THE SUPPORT OF



Department of English (Language and Communication)  
Faculty of Humanities (Forschungs- und  
Nachwuchsförderungskommission)

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## **DAY 1: MONDAY 11 DECEMBER**

9:00-9:30 Welcome

9:30-10:30 **Communicating the City**  
**Giorgia Aiello, University of Leeds, UK**

*Coffee break*

11:00-11:30 Entrepreneurial scaling and urban place-making: The case of Nya Hovås  
*Johan Järlehed and Tove Rosendal, University of Gothenburg, Sweden*  
*Maria Löfdahl, Institutet för Språk och Folkminnen, Göteborg, Sweden*  
*Helle Lykke Nielsen, Syddansk Universitet, Denmark*

11:30-12:00 New urban chic: The semiotic landscape of gentrification in US cities  
*Gabriella Modan, The Ohio State University, USA*

12:00-12:30 Urbanity in type design: Exploring the promotional discourse of typefaces  
*Martina Zimmermann, University of Teacher Education Lucerne, Switzerland*

*Lunch at Pittaria*

14:00-15:00 **A Multilingual City for Sale**  
**Alexandre Duchêne, University of Fribourg, Switzerland**

*Coffee break*

15:15-15:45 'International Geneva' and multilingualism: Changing values of French and English at the International Committee of the Red Cross  
*Maria Rosa Garrido Sardà, University of Lausanne, Switzerland*

15:45-16:15 Fanatically positive and militantly optimistic? New tendencies in Russian urban communication  
*Olga Leontovich, Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University, Russia*

*Coffee break*

16:30-17:00 Negotiating identities: Children of immigrants in London  
*Sue Fox, University of Bern, Switzerland*

17:00-17:30 On the diffusion of social meaning in Contemporary Urban Vernacular Research: A mixed-method approach  
*Stefania Marzo, KU Leuven, Belgium*

**Dinner at 19:00 (Tre Fratelli)**

## DAY 2: TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER

9:15-9:30 Welcome

9:30-10:30 **The City is Watching You**  
**Rodney H. Jones, University of Reading, UK**

*Coffee break*

11:00-11:30 The multifunctionality of language activism – Acts of citizenship among urban youth in Sweden  
*Henning Årman, Stockholm University, Sweden*

11:30-12:00 Place-identities and naming practices in metropolitan Lagos: Mobility and textuality  
*Felix B. Oke, Anchor University, Nigeria*

12:00-12:30 Diversity of masculine identities constructed in dormitory room conversations in Budapest  
*Gergely Szabó, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary*

*Lunch at Grosse Schanze*

14:00-15:00 **Food, Language and the City: Constructing Edible ‘Danish-ness’ in Copenhagen**  
**Martha Karrebæk, University of Copenhagen, Denmark**

*Coffee break*

15:15-15:45 Rural cosmopolitanism: Performing locality and authenticity in Swiss food discourse  
*Gwynne Mapes, University of Bern, Switzerland*

15:45-16:15 Local roots, cosmopolitan aspirations: ‘Good citizenship’ in the city-state of Singapore  
*Raymund Vitorio, National University of Singapore and King’s College London*

*Coffee break*

16:30-17:00 The changing dialectics of Grünerløkka or ‘get a whiff of what Oslo was like in the late 1800’s’  
*Kellie Gonçalves and Kristin Vold Lexander, Center for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan, University of Oslo, Norway*

17:00-17:30 The affective, embodied and more-than-linguistic landscapes of privileged queer space in ‘Africa’s gay capital’  
*Joseph Comer, University of Bern, Switzerland*

17:30 Closing remarks

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

### **Communicating the City**

*Giorgia Aiello, University of Leeds, UK*

In the face of economic and cultural globalization, many have argued that we live an increasingly placeless world. However, as a growing number of cities compete for global attention, the spectacle of the city is more than ever a significant medium of communication in its own right. This talk focuses on how the urban built environment is visually represented and materially fashioned to communicate the city as world-class—for example, through the adoption of globalizing urban regeneration formats like that of the ‘urban village’, and the selection of particular combinations of styles and textures in the (re)design of urban environments. With examples from Leeds, Seattle (USA), Bologna (Italy), and a number of second-tier cities competing for the title of European Capital of Culture, I discuss some of the ways in which these aesthetic agendas applied to urban form may ultimately exclude less profitable yet vital versions and visions of urban life.

In doing so, this work focuses specifically on the visual and broadly multimodal dimensions of cities to highlight the importance of the urban built environment as a major form/force of mediation and mediatization in advanced capitalism. On the one hand, the urban built environment communicates specific discourses and ideologies, and therefore also quite literally mediates the performances of our everyday life. On the other hand, it is also often mobilized as mediatized and aestheticized currency for the remote publics found across powerful global marketplaces such as tourism, public communication, real estate, and commerce. Through a conceptualization of this kind, this work offers a critical approach that contributes not only to centring the urban built environment as a key dimension of communication studies, but also to making communication scholarship into a more prominent field for the study of the city.

## **A Multilingual City for Sale**

*Alexandre Duchêne, University of Fribourg, Switzerland*

In a time of global competition, cities, like other entities, spare no pains in elaborating strategies that will allow them to grow, to be distinctive and attractive or simply to economically survive. An excellent infrastructure, tax incentives, a high quality of life or cultural offers all become potential selling propositions in this competitive market of urban opportunities. But also, local populations and some of their characteristics may even be on the forefront in the branding of a city. This paper will thus provide evidence of the ways multilingualism and a multilingual population become selling proposition in the marketing and self-stylization of Biel/Bienne, a bilingual German and French-speaking city in Western Switzerland. In particular it is the aim of this paper to examine what happens when multilingualism is turned into a commodity and becomes an object of desire, consumption and economic opportunity. Since the 1990s, Biel/Bienne has promoted itself as a “the city of communication”, conceiving the language skills of the local population as economic asset ready to attract businesses that in some way or the other rely and build on a multilingual workforce such as the call center industry. Within this context, this talk will highlight (a) the socio-economic conditions that have led Biel/Bienne to reposition itself from a bilingual city towards a multilingual urban economic space;(b) how this positioning is discursively constructed and legitimized by political and economic stakeholders in the city; and (c) the resulting tensions and consequences of this positioning for those workers who embody the “city of communication”. Based on these insights I will argue that the economic instrumentalization of the city’s multilingualism is closely intertwined with issues of social class and reflects the social stratification of the city’s population. I will further show that multilingualism as a driving force for economic development not only is no guarantee for sustainable economic growth or a diversified economy but instead takes a great part in the reproduction of power relations between languages and speakers, while maintaining the economically most vulnerable share of the population in precarious social positions.

## **The City is Watching You**

Rodney H. Jones, University of Reading, UK

Thus far most work in the area of ‘linguistic landscapes’ and ‘metrolinguism’ (Pennycook, 2015) has focused on the ways language is inscribed onto environments and how such inscriptions reflect broader sociolinguistic, socio-cultural and political realities. There has been relatively less attention in sociolinguistics to the way urban environments act to enable and constrain certain kinds of social interactions between people through technological enhancements (such as sensors and security cameras) and features of architecture and layout that regulate the *visibility* of bodies and the possibilities for people to be *monitored* and to mutually monitor one another. As Amin and Thrift (2016: 36, 39) put it, cities are increasingly becoming complex adaptive systems ‘awash with sensors and processors nested in street technologies, public infrastructures, buildings, homes and offices, and all kinds of mobile device’ and ‘governed by the balance of force between many authority structures – corporate and institutional, technical and infrastructural, computational and cartographic, social and symbolic, codified and informal’. This paper attempts to understand how sociolinguistics, particularly nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon, 2004), can make a contribution to understanding these assemblages and the kinds of semiotic flows they enable and constrain. It seeks to develop a framework through which we can understand how the *orders of visibility* (Kerfoot & Hyltenstam, 2017) created by urban landscapes serve to reproduce particular power structures and ideologies which construct some people as objects of surveillance (such as migrants, black bodies), while assigning to others the ‘right to look’ (Mirzoeff, 2011). At the same time, I also seek ways to detect ‘cracks’ in these surveillant assemblages (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000) and uncover tactics that citizens, consumers, and other victims of surveillance use to *re-signify* discourses in place, *reconfigure* interaction orders, and *re-inscribe* their bodies onto these urban landscapes on their own terms.

**Food, language and the city: Constructing edible 'Danish-ness' in Copenhagen**  
*Martha Karrebæk, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

As food and food-related issues receive heightened societal focus these years, it is relevant for a socially-engaged science of language to interact with the food area. Such socio-linguistic interest concerns the communicative processes through which social meaning is conveyed, created, contested, and developed through (Silverstein 2003), around and about food (Riley & Cavanaugh 2017). This paper discusses an intersection between food, communicative processes and the city, and the focus is on some of the different functions food obtains in an urban setting. This takes into account the nature of the city, as well as its different food-centered professions. Most particularly, I argue that everyday encounters with difference and an incessant drive for change come to be significant for people's discursive interpretations, negotiations and struggles in the food area.

In this paper I focus on pork and rye bread. Both are regarded as key elements of the traditional Danish kitchen (Boyhus 1998), and as such they are associated with an imagined past. They are also regarded as foreign to parts of the immigrant population. These differences in the Danish population give pork and rye bread particular semiotic potential as a signifier of 'Danish-ness', and specific food practices come to recursively reproduce cultural struggles at other societal levels between "immigrants" and "Danes." Although such struggles take place both inside and outside of cities, not the least through the media, I argue that they are particularly powerful in the contemporary urban context. As a case in point, I use different types of data to demonstrate interpretations and re-interpretations of pork in three ethnographic settings, all located in the capital city of Copenhagen: a high-end restaurant (Karrebæk & Maegaard forthcoming), a classroom (Karrebæk 2013), and a modern hipster fast-food restaurant. The paper thereby looks at how sign values of foodstuff are contextually embedded and motivated; how history and tradition are relevant for understanding contemporary practice; and how large-scale societal developments influence contemporary understandings and usage by making some meanings particularly available and relevant, independently of the context.

## **SPEAKER ABSTRACTS**

### **The multifunctionality of language activism: Acts of citizenship among urban youth in Sweden**

*Henning Årman, Stockholm University, Sweden*

The primary aim of the paper is to explore the multimodal language regimentation and policing at a senior high school. Queer-theoretical and post-colonial perspectives often informed students' language activism as they appropriated political concepts from the transnational flow of queer and post-colonial activist discourse on social media platforms. The language regimentation was motivated as a means to create an inclusive social space for the students commuting to the school from different parts of the city. However, acting in conformity with the local linguistic regime at the school required specific linguistic capital, symbolic resources in the form of knowledge of specific theoretical thinking-tools and mastering of an activist jargon. Such resources were unevenly distributed among both students and staff. Using analytical tools provided by Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012), this paper investigates the language policing as "acts of citizenship" (Isin 2008) with the potential of creating an inclusive social space but at the same time produce new exclusions, re-segregations.

Recognizing the multimodal dimension of all meaning-making, the paper draws inspiration from the studies of semiotic landscapes (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2011) and the data includes posters, stickers, scribbles and other signage in the high school, as well as recordings of naturally occurring interaction and ethnographic chats (Selleck, 2013).

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### **The affective, embodied and more-than-linguistic landscapes of privileged queer space in 'Africa's gay capital'**

*Joseph Comer, University of Bern, Switzerland*

In this paper, I interrogate the mediatized production of place as well as the globalizing rhetorics of LGBTQ tourism, through contrasting the rather hyperbolic quote above with its realisation in the material environment of Cape Town – a city regularly declared 'Africa's gay capital' on sites such as *gaytravelsouthafrica.com*. My ethnographically informed account of a reasonably typical LGBTQ tourist encounter with the seemingly queer, cosmopolitan landscape of Cape Town considers the way both locals and visitors there are imagined and positioned in space. In doing so, this paper builds on existing research in tourism discourse (Thurlow and Jaworski 2010), as well as work in semiotic landscape analysis (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010; Milani 2014); it also incorporates multimodal critical discourse analysis (Machin 2013), and autoethnography (Anderson 2006). I consider how this purportedly vibrant 'cosmopolitan' city ends up looking to tourists, and further, how it feels, sounds, smells, disturbs and, at times, *seduces* (cf. Taylor and Falconer 2015). Investigating the signs, seedy clubs, streets, and geography of queer Cape Town, I note how often-playful linguistic and visual tropes of both LGBTQ tourism and liberated, camp sexual expression can obscure deep-seated historical and contemporary inequalities. In addition, I also note how affective and embodied modalities, alongside language, play

a significant role in hiding these inequalities, imbricating queer people within them, and encouraging an ethos of privilege. Within Cape Town's 'queerscape', hedonistic rhetorics of pride, globality, post-apartheid progress, and equality are co-opted into 'homonormative' (Duggan 2002) discourses inscribing ideologies of individual freedom, hegemonic masculinity, and singular LGBTQ lifestyles. Over two decades of social progress now means that "the straight clubs are the gay clubs", as one Capetonian remarked – sexual freedoms are assured there. Overall, however, it remains a place in which the embrace of sexual diversity – and cosmopolitan capital – is steeped in a gendered, classed and raced ersatz imitation of equality.

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### **Negotiating identities: Children of immigrants in London**

*Sue Fox, University of Bern, Switzerland*

Sociolinguistic work on London English has shown that both language and dialect contact have played an important role in the emergence of innovations found in inner city areas (Cheshire et al. 2011). These innovations are shared by speakers of different ethnic backgrounds and are brought about by young people as they interact with immigrant and non-immigrant friends. The term *Multicultural London English* (MLE) has been used to describe an ethnically neutral variable repertoire containing a core of innovative phonetic, grammatical, and discourse pragmatic features.

However, the degree of use of MLE features has only been analysed between groups of speakers and we have yet to fully develop an understanding of how individual speakers fit into this scenario. In contemporary urban societies such as London, which have been subject to the impact of high levels of migration, individuals often have to negotiate a range of identities as they position themselves among their peers and family members. Many young people in this situation construct dynamic identities that often straddle cultural, linguistic and national boundaries (Bucholtz and Skapoulli 2009).

In this talk, I will present a number of case studies: a male Bangladeshi adolescent, a female Albanian adolescent and longitudinal data from a Nigerian family. I will discuss the ways in which these speakers construct and negotiate their ethnic identities by considering their metalinguistic comments as well as their patterns of language use. By examining individuals in this way, we can perhaps also arrive at a better understanding of the continual process of competition and selection which changes the pattern of variation within the wider speech community.

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### **'International Geneva' and multilingualism: Changing values of French and English at the International Committee of the Red Cross**

*Maria Rosa Garrido Sardà, University of Lausanne, Switzerland*

In this presentation, I will analyse firstly "International Geneva" as a discursive formation since the early 20th century and secondly, Geneva – and the official French

language – as an identity marker for the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) today.

Geneva's international cooperation dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the foundation of the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (1863) and the first Geneva Convention (1864). "International Geneva" has promoted its global role in multi-lateral politics and humanitarianism through discourses of political neutrality and coexistence among linguistic groups in Switzerland (Duchêne and del Percio 2014). Linguistically, Geneva is presented as Francophone, given the officiality of French in the Canton and its (former) role as diplomatic language. Nowadays, the idea of an "international language" is strongly connected to English and, as recent studies show (Yeung 2016, Adly 2013), to "expats" working for international organisations in Geneva.

Against this backdrop, the ICRC has moved from a Swiss, Francophone and *genevoise* association with an international mandate into a multi-national "humanitarian enterprise" (Palmieri 2012) with changes in the values of French and English. Based on archival and ethnographic data (2016-2017), I will analyse the ideological constructions of French as a *genevois* identity marker and English as the "international" language linked to mobility among ICRC delegates. Since the opening of mobile positions to non-Swiss nationals in 1992, English has gradually become the main working language at the ICRC (Mercier 2004: 34) and a requirement in combination with mainly French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian. In response to staff "internationalisation" and on-going service delocalisations, this institution has maintained its "longstanding roots" in Geneva (2013) and made French "an asset" and even a requirement for certain positions. Thus, French preserves its privileged position within a diversity discourse that does not question English hegemony (Chansou 1983).

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### **The changing dialectics of Grünerløkka or 'get a whiff of what Oslo was like in the late 1800s'**

*Kellie Gonçalves and Kristin Vold Lexander, Center for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan, University of Oslo, Norway*

Center for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan, University of Oslo, Norway. According to the World Bank, Norway is one of the world's richest economies with a growing percentage of its population being foreign migrants, making the linguistic landscape of an already multilingual country even more complex. Global diversity, however, is actually considered to be a recent phenomenon in Oslo - (Oslo City Report 2014) a city that has been characterized by "decades of net emigration rather than immigration" (King & Carson 2014: 35). Norway, and the city of Oslo in particular, has seen high levels of immigration for work over the past decade, partly because the country has remained relatively unaffected by the financial crisis that has hit other parts of Europe. In fact, Norway continues to experience rapid immigration flow of many migrants from Poland, Lithuania, Somalia, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Morocco, the Ukraine (Horst et al. 2010), and more recently, Syria. The language practices associated with immigration are affected by the fact that English is widely spoken, and that many labor migrants—at least initially—do not

foresee permanent settlement. However, the amount of multilingual signage found in specific urban spaces in Oslo is growing, such as in the Grünerløkka neighborhood.

In this study, we investigate the discourses surrounding the trends and changes taking place in one particular neighborhood in Oslo, namely, Grünerløkka. As a historical district and home to the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, Grünerløkka has transformed from a primarily working-class area, where mainly migrant and thus minority language speakers resided, to a 'hood' that is currently undergoing gentrification processes as a result of global and economic production and expansion and its ensuing cultural consumption (Zukin 1987; Trinch & Snajdr 2017). In this study, we utilize three different data sets collected over a 6-month period in 2017: a) interviews conducted with local residents and business owners, b) multilingual and multimodal signage found within this neighborhood's changing linguistic and semiotic landscapes and c) texts from several online platforms. The diverse data sets are analyzed employing a discourse analytical approach to showcase the changing dialectics of Grünerløkka as a place that is both historical and modern but witnessing a time of transition. More specifically, we examine how different actors with diverse aims regarding the development of the neighborhood perform their discourse about their "Løkka". In sum, Grünerløkka has managed to remain ethnically diverse, albeit catering to a growing new gentry (Warf 2000), thus maintaining a cosmopolitan urban flare while perpetuating social inequality among specific residents within actual lived in city spaces.

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### **Entrepreneurial scaling and urban place-making: The case of Nya Hovås**

*Johan Järlehed and Tove Rosendal, University of Gothenburg, Sweden*

*Maria Löfdahl, Institutet för Språk och Folkminnen, Göteborg, Sweden*

*Helle Lykke Nielsen, Syddansk Universitet, Denmark*

Along highway 158, some 14 km south of Gothenburg's city centre (Sweden), a new urban neighbourhood is created: *Nya Hovås*. Until recently *Nya* (new) *Hovås* was a non-place (Augé), an unpopulated area around the highway exit. In a few years it has become a complete neighbourhood. The construction has been accompanied by an extensive and expensive advertising campaign in both traditional and new media (FB and Instagram). In order to attract attention and interest, a large part of the campaign has focused on creating a unique identity based on the following values: newness (*Hovås* vs *Nya Hovås*); accessibility (both to the nearby coast and to the city centre); urban coolness (architectural resources such as a wooden amphitheatre and a rooftop school-yard are combined with textual references to hip urban centres); creativity (adaptations of the iconic Hollywood sign and NY logo heart); and international flair (continuous choice of high status names and languages).

This paper investigates how multi-modal place-branding and identity-making involves scalar work (Carr & Lempert 2016) in the sense of imagination, translation, recontextualization, intertextuality and remediation. It examines how linguistic, typographic, textual, visual and architectural resources are used for situating this new neighbourhood in the world, and in the audience's mind. By so doing it contributes to the ongoing examination and discussion of different aspects and dimensions of urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey 1989), gentrification (Zukin 2010) and theming (Leeman &

Modan 2009), such as the increased intermingling of private and public initiatives (Light & Young 2015) and the confluence of naming and branding practices (Medway & Warnaby 2014).

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### **Fanatically positive and militantly optimistic? New tendencies in Russian urban communication**

*Olga Leontovich, Volgograd State Socio-Pedagogical University, Russia*

The investigation is done from the perspective of critical discourse analysis and views a big city as a specific communication system with its own structure, channels and forms of interaction. It examines new trends and challenges of urban communication on the example of Volgograd, one of the ten biggest Russian cities, in many ways more typical than westernized Moscow. Data have been collected from observation, interviews, Internet blogs, social networks, TV programs and advertising.

The study shows that urban communication is formed under the influence of two opposite information flows: “top-down” represented by centralized media and “bottom-up” (interpersonal and social group interaction). The former predominantly possesses characteristics typical of globalized media (use of aggressive communication strategies, conflict, scandal, etc. aimed at attracting the attention of a wide audience). Though strongly influenced by mass media, the latter displays positive features as a way of counterbalancing the flow of negativity: 1) grassroots initiative; 2) growth of face-to-face rather than computer-mediated communication; 3) emphasis on intellectual and cultural activities.

The sites and forms of encounters are either specifically Russian (anti-café, “posidelki”, “kvartirniki”) or international (debates, table games, improvised dance floors for younger or older people, express dating, etc.). The emergence of new forms of communication, partially due to globalization, brings about changes in discourse patterns and vocabulary, e. g.: 1) acquisition of foreign words, such as *flashmob*, *people fests*, *pechakucha*; 2) formation of hybrids (*khudoznik-outsider*, *art-ob’ekt*, *salsa vecherinka*); 3) extensive use of wordplay (*ikra = game / ikra – caviar*; *perezagruzka = reboot / change of life*). The paper explores implications of study findings for the improvement of communication climate in Russian society.

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### **Rural cosmopolitanism: Performing locality and authenticity in Swiss food discourse**

*Gwynne Mapes, University of Bern, Switzerland*

Food, like language, plays a central role in the production of culture; it is likewise a powerful resource for the representation and organization of social order. Status is asserted or contested through both the materiality of food (e.g. its substance and raw economics) and through its discursivity (e.g. the way it’s depicted and discussed). This intersection of language and materiality (cf. Shankar & Cavanaugh 2017) makes food

an ideal site for examining the place of language in contemporary class formations (cf. Thurlow 2016). As a case in point, my paper examines a dataset of multimodal food texts (e.g. online resources, signage, shop displays, and food tourism activities) drawn from an artisanal cured meats producer in Switzerland who explicitly self-styles as the height of modern, cosmopolitan food practices and trends. Combining critical discourse analysis and social semiotics, I document the linguistic, verbal and material tactics by which stakeholders produce a discourse of *elite authenticity* indexed by, for example, claims to locality, sustainability, and especially rurality. This discourse hinges on the iconization, romanticization and exploitation of agrarian life in ways that strategically (dis)avow elitist distinction. In fact, I argue that the production – and circulation – of this discourse erases the complex realities of the rural Other (cf. hooks 1992), while elevating the privileged consumption practices of urban life and cosmopolitan elites. As such, particular ways of eating (and particular eaters) are hailed as simultaneously fashionable and socially/politically virtuous (cf. Kenway and Lazarus 2017), while covertly reinscribing privileged standards of good taste (cf. Bourdieu 1984) and class inequality.

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**On the diffusion of social meaning in Contemporary Urban Vernacular research:  
A mixed-method approach.**

*Stefania Marzo, KU Leuven, Belgium*

This paper investigates the use and diffusion of a Flemish multilingual youngster variety that sociolinguists and laymen call *Citétaal* or ‘Cité Dutch’. Cité Dutch is a case in point of an internationally occurring phenomenon whereby multilingual variants of the local majority language emerge in culturally diverse urban areas in Western Europe (Nortier/Svendsen 2015). Scholars generally refer to these ways of speaking as Contemporary Urban Vernaculars (Rampton 2011) (henceforth CUVs).

The empirical point of departure is the spread of CUVs among local-born youngsters through social media (e.g. Androutsopoulos 2010) and in particular the observation that Cité Dutch is spreading among Flemish youngsters beyond the neighborhoods where it emerged. However, it is still not clear with which social meaning CUV features spread over the larger community: *do they spread with the same social meaning or do they acquire new social meanings while spreading?* The main reason behind this gap lies in the long-standing dispute between variationists (focusing mainly on inter-speaker variation) and interactional linguists (focusing mainly on intra-speaker variation) on the best way of studying the social meaning of variation.

This investigation aims to move the field of CUV research forward by analyzing the social meaning of Cité Dutch features used by speakers in and beyond the region where it emerged. To this end, we will integrate insights from (quantitative) variationist sociolinguistics and (qualitative) interactional linguistics. This mixed-methods approach will allow us to integrate *in situ* patterns of intra-speaker variation with aggregative patterns of inter-speaker variation.

We draw on a corpus of naturally-occurring interactions of 40 speakers. In these interactions, we scrutinize the use and diffusion of a feature of Cité Dutch, viz. the

palatalization of [s] in [ʃ] in first syllable position - e.g. *stijl* 'style', pronounced as [ʃtɛil] instead of [stɛil]). This feature is becoming a shibboleth of Cité Dutch as it is fastly spreading through media, while still being associated with typical Cité Dutch speech. The alternations between palatalized and non-palatalized variants are analyzed with a mixed method analysis whereby a quantitative variationist analysis of the distribution of the variants across speakers (relying on mixed effect regression modeling) is complemented by an in-depth interactional analysis (focusing on how speakers construct and negotiate identities) and interactional insights are implemented in the quantitative models.

This study does not only shed light on the motivational and social triggers for palatalization in a Flemish CUV case but, perhaps more importantly, it demonstrates that variationist and interactional perspectives cannot be separated if we want to fully understand why speakers shift to CUV features and how social meaning spreads.

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### **New urban chic: The semiotic landscape of gentrification in US cities**

*Gabriella Modan, The Ohio State University, USA*

City streets are texts that are written in words, images, and architectural features. Urban residents and visitors alike make judgments about city spaces based on the ideological frameworks they bring to interpreting the particular conglomeration of signs and symbols in a given space. As cities and neighborhoods the world over undergo rapid change and revaluation, the meanings of the built environment change as new signs and symbols replace or are added to old ones. Concurrently, new patterns of symbolic configurations on city streets can shape the meanings of the linguistic elements that appear in those environments. This is what's happening with the word *urban* in the US.

*Urban* has commonly served as a euphemism for characteristics popularly associated with the disinvested city – crime-ridden, dirty, dilapidated streets; poor, racial-minority residents. With the increasing caché of city living and concomitant rapid gentrification, such meanings are fading. Taking a semiotic landscape approach, I investigate how material manifestations of language, in concert with other visual signs in the built environment, are promoting a physical and symbolic reconfiguration of urban space and a shift in the meaning of the word 'urban' itself. I examine upscale establishments in central Washington DC that display the word *urban* on their facades as part of a shop name or advertising slogan, and the locally-made artisanal products they sell that brand themselves as DC by means of DC-based names or use of the DC map, or DC flag.

These products, architectural building features, and sign wording, typeface, and construction material mutually shape each other's meaning and together reshape popular meanings of urban culture, whereby inner-city neighborhoods are inscribed as chic, wealthy enclaves. In casting urban culture as chic, these practices marginalize city dwellers and city spaces that don't conform to *urban*'s new meaning.

## **Place-identities and naming practices in metropolitan Lagos: Mobility and textuality**

*Felix B. Oke, Anchor University, Nigeria*

Research in the study of names, that is, onomastics, present areas of name study which include personal names (anthroponyms), place names (toponyms), acronyms, brand names and trade names among others. These studies provide explanations based on how linguistic disciplines have helped to shape the interpretation of names in general. In this current study on place-identities and naming practices in Metropolitan Lagos, attempts are made to investigate naming practices in both diachronic and synchronic perspectives with clear explanations from historical referent of place names as well as linguistic landscape perspective. Thus, in examining place-names in Lagos Metropolis, the paper considers not only the social and political histories of place-names but also the cultural heritage place-names have preserved in the region under study. For data, twenty in-depth semi-structured interviews would be carried out on a sample of residents from historic locations in Lagos metropolis. The method of analysis is content analysis using Nvivo 11 software for coding. The study is anchored on social identity theory, place-identity and linguistic landscape using a multimodal approach. The findings reveal how place-identities construct and position selves in relation to space (environment). The understanding of naming practices in Metropolitan Lagos, therefore, underscores the relationship of place-identities with the origin, history, meaning and social and economic status of people living in this region among others.

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## **Diversity of masculine identities constructed in dormitory room conversations in Budapest**

*Gergely Szabó, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary*

The phenomenon of diversification of diversity or so-called “superdiversity” evolving from migration, globalisation, and information revolution has become a key recently among scholars attentive to the intersections of language and societal changes (Blommaert 2010, Duchêne–Moyer–Roberts eds. 2013, Jørgensen et al. 2011, Martin–Jones–Martin eds. 2017, Smakman–Heinrich eds. 2015). However, in the growing body of literature on (super)diversity, we hardly find any researches addressing gender as an analytical aspect besides ethnicity. My presentation focuses on the issue of masculine identities performed in everyday conversations. Specifically, I examine the conflicts of different masculinities in conjunction with homosocial desire (Kiesling 2005), hegemonic masculinity (Pascoe 2007), and homosexual innuendos (Milani–Jonsson 2011) in interactions between university students of Budapest. For the analysis, I used the database of a project called Budapest University Dormitory Corpus (2015–2017), in which dormitory residents were asked to record conversations in their rooms, and the data was supplemented by an interview with questions referring to current social issues. Dormitories in Budapest create diverse spaces in respect of inhabitants’ different sociocultural and economic background, even of gender expectations, where students migrating from smaller places (or sometimes other countries) to the capital city of Hungary. I argue that these dissimilar gender assumptions result in interactional inequities, and therefore speakers develop different discourse strategies to seize

dominance, for instance by stopping heteronormative discussions or by performing hypermasculine identities. This research, by closely examining a particular space of inner migration, sheds new light on the rarely investigated diversity of masculine identities in an urban context.

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### **Local roots, cosmopolitan aspirations: ‘Good citizenship’ in the city-state of Singapore**

*Raymund Vitorio, National University of Singapore and King’s College London*

This paper investigates the notions of “citizenship” and “good citizenship” in Singapore—a highly developed, multicultural, and multilingual city-state in Southeast Asia that heavily relies on immigration as an economic resource. While citizenship is a political category that is traditionally understood in relation to gatekeeping and nation-building concerns of countries, its discursive construction in Singapore tends to include additional socioeconomic aspects driven by Singapore’s status as a global city-state.

I examine how the definition of a good citizen has shifted from being primarily focused on multiculturalism, meritocracy, and pragmatism—which Hill and Lian (1995) describe as the founding myths of Singapore—to also incorporating aspirations of cosmopolitanism and performances of globalized identities while still having strong local affiliation to the nation. This paper proposes a metapragmatic approach to understanding citizenship and good citizenship by looking at how they are semiotically constructed as metasigns (cf. Gal, 2016; Jaffe, 2016) which people simultaneously discursively (re)construct and orient themselves to.

Using a linguistic ethnographic approach, I examine various public media (e.g. government documents, speeches, news media articles) and interview (i.e. with Singapore residents of different citizenship statuses, such as new citizens, long-term residents, and migrants) discourse data in order to understand how “citizenship” and “good citizenship” are discursively constructed by and circulate around different members of Singapore society. I also explore how these representations are influenced by the material conditions of the city-state. By looking at citizenship not just as neutral categories where people are supposed to fall into but as a continuous process of negotiation mediated by various sociolinguistic means, we can better appreciate not only how the global city-state reconfigures its citizenship-based processes of differentiation, but also to the theory of language ideologies.

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### **Urbanity in type design: Exploring the promotional discourse of typefaces**

*Martina Zimmermann, Pädagogische Hochschule Luzern, Switzerland*

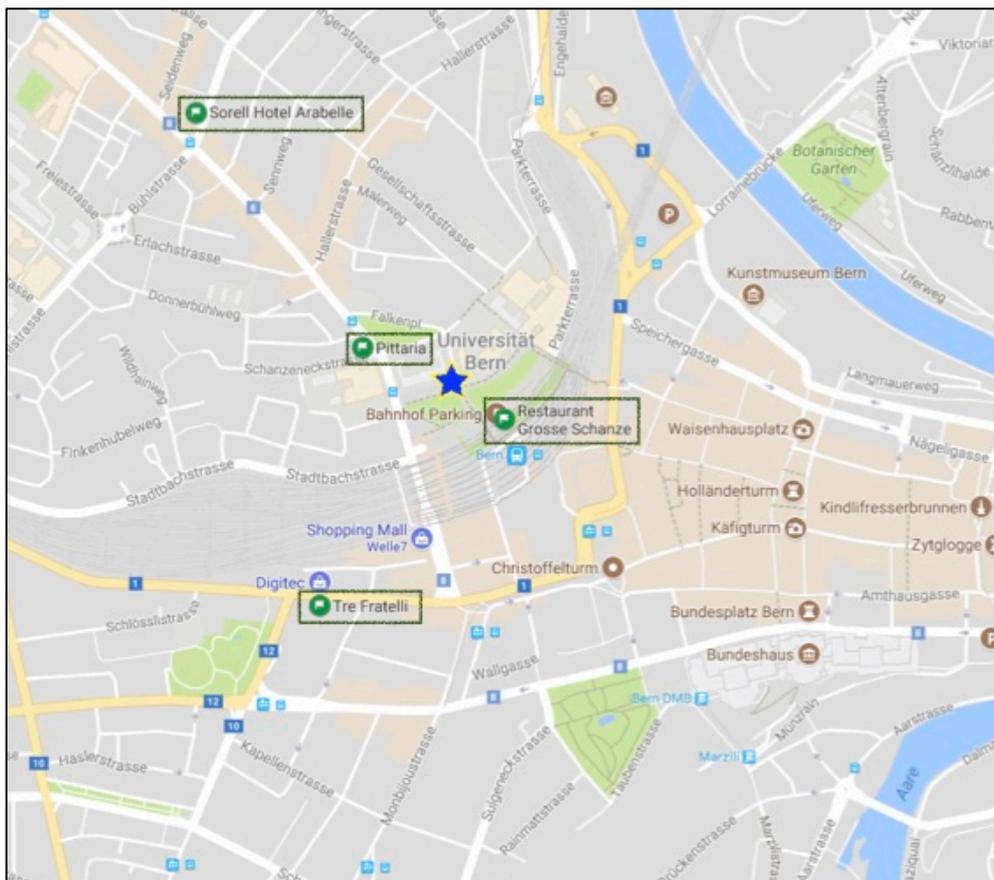
This paper will provide evidence of the ways urbanity is discursively constructed by globally operating typesetting agencies. By examining the promotional discourses of typefaces, I explore the social meaning ascribed to (typo-)graphic variation and raise questions on the categorization of fonts showing a particular interest for fonts described as 'urban'.

Drawing on an intercontinental online index of typesetting agencies, I analyse font descriptions and specimen (Duru 2011). The particular communicative conditions of this promotional practice are framed by the aims of creating the desire for fonts and targeting an audience assumed to consist of potential users and herewith buyers (King 1999, Spitzmüller 2013).

Within this context I argue that the discursive construction of 'urban' fonts inevitably reflects economic conditions and as such contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities. My analysis demonstrates that the authors of font descriptions and respective specimens – often the designers – adopt certain strategies in the process of striving for distinction. Besides allocating quantifiable profiles to fonts by highlighting the amount of glyphs, styles, supported scripts and languages, fonts get categorized, as 'handwriting fonts', 'wedding fonts', 'urban fonts' etc., I discuss how the category urbanity is discursively and visually expressed and made distinguishable. I thereby claim that certain graphic elements get accentuated via particular language (Järlehed & Jaworski 2015).

Studying this promotional discourse sheds light on the 'sayable' and 'showable' and thus the power of knowledge (Foucault 1980) valid in the competitive market of the type industry in which type designers/authors of font descriptions navigate. It further illustrates the linguistic and typographic variation mobilized to claim 'urbanity' and the need to make choices, choices that inevitably carry social meaning and illuminate economic realities – and in particular inequalities – reaching beyond national contexts (Sebba 2013).

## GENERAL INFORMATION



Map 1 - Central Bern

### Conference venue and lunch/dinner locations:

All presentations and coffee breaks will take place in Room 331 of the Hauptgebäude (main building) of the University of Bern. This building is marked with a blue star on Map 1, above, and in red on the map on the following page.

The locations for lunch and dinner, and the conference hotel, are also marked in green on Map 1. All are within 5 – 10 minutes' walk of the Hauptgebäude:

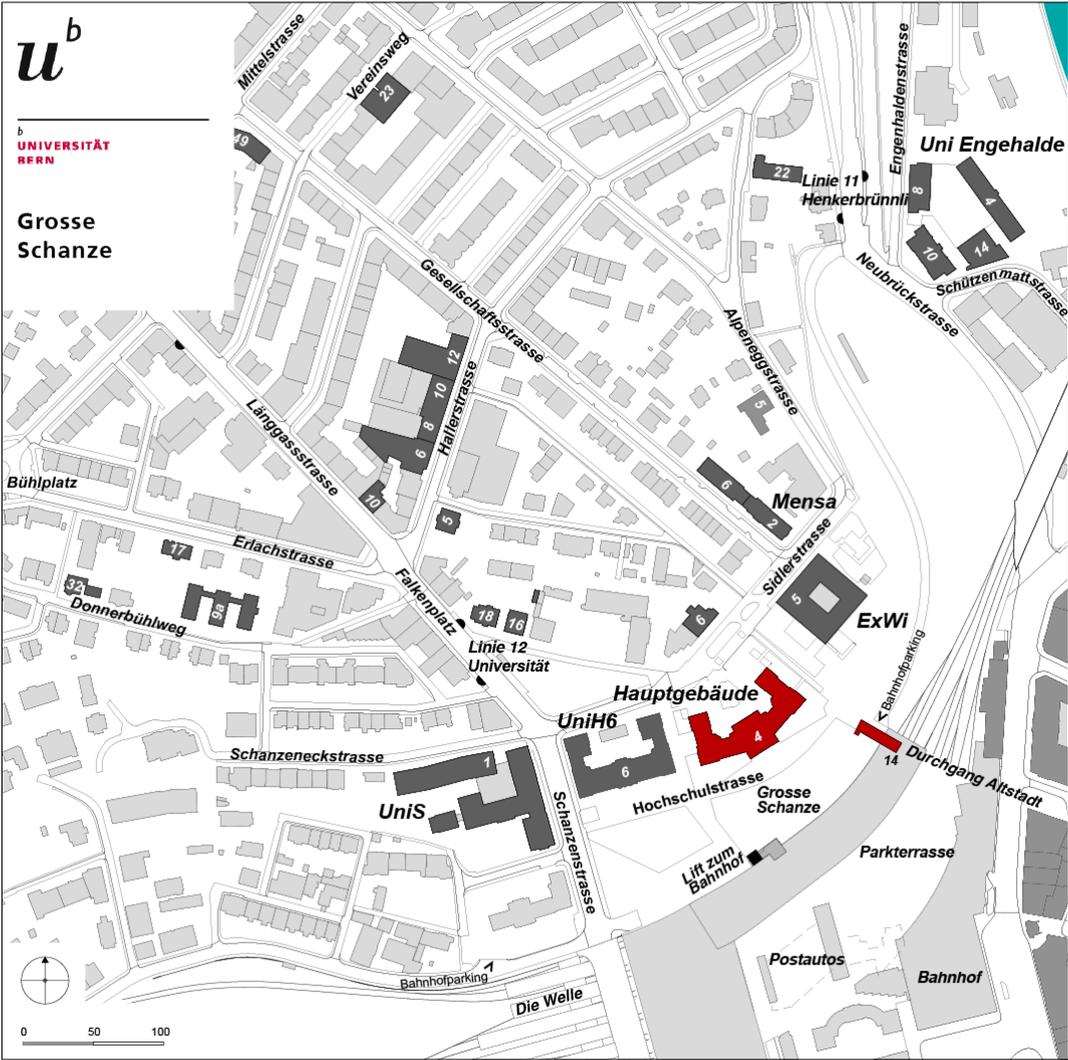
- *Pittaria* – Falkenplatz 1, 3012 Bern
- *Grosse Schanze* – Parkterrasse 10, 3012 Bern
- *Tre Fratelli* – Laupenstrasse 17, 3008 Bern
- *Sorell Hotel Arabelle* – Mittelstrasse 6, 3012 Bern

### Directions to the venue from inside the train station:

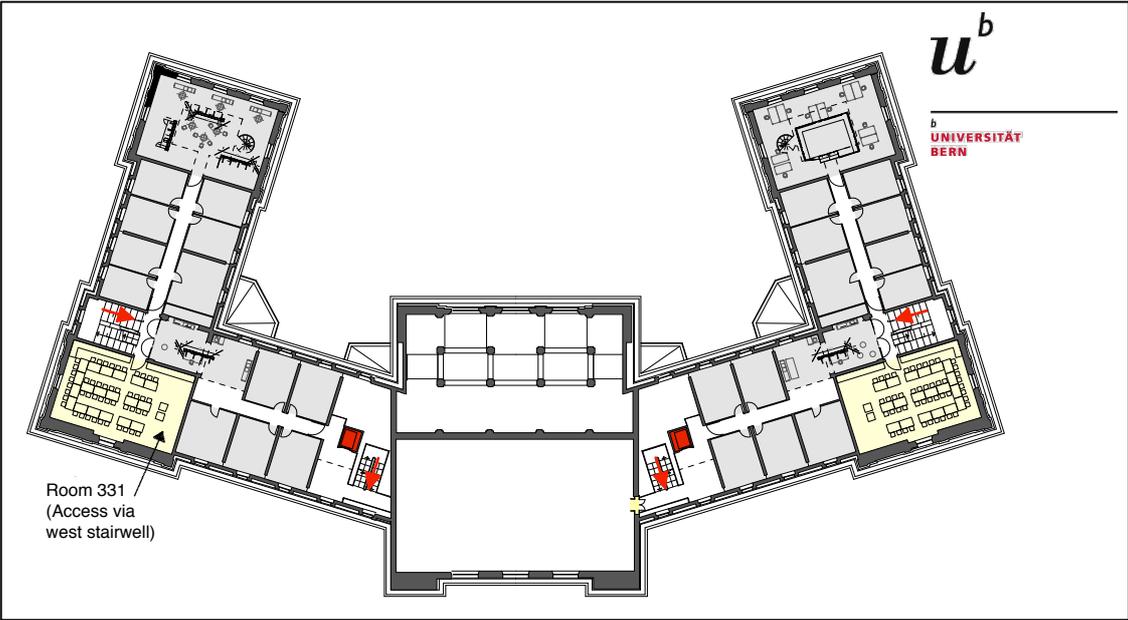
From inside the station, walk through the passageway past all the platforms until you reach the lift to 'Grosse Schanze', marked on Map 2 (on the following page) as 'Lift zum Bahnhof'. Turn right after exiting the lift and walk across the park to the west entrance of the building (found between the Hauptgebäude and UniH6 on Map 2). Once inside, walk up the west stairwell to Room 331 (shown at the left of Map 3).

From any of the station's platforms you may also ride the escalators up to Schanzenstrasse ('Die Welle' on Map 2) and continue to the Hauptgebäude.

The nearest public transport stop (for bus #12) is 'Universität' (as shown in the centre of Map 2), a short walk from the Hauptgebäude.



Map 2 - Grosse Schanze, including Hauptgebäude



Map 3 - Hauptgebäude

**Workshop lunches:**

Our lunch on Monday, 11 December will be held at *Pittaria* – a menu sign-up will be distributed that morning at the workshop. Our lunch on Tuesday, 12 December will be held at the *Grosse Schanze* restaurant (buffet). In both cases, all costs are covered.

**Workshop dinner:**

The workshop dinner, at *Tre Fratelli* (<http://tre-fratelli-bern.ch/>), will begin at 19:00 on Monday, 11 December. Unfortunately we are not able to cover costs for this, so we understand if some are unable to participate. A sign-up sheet for attendance will be distributed at the workshop on Monday afternoon.

## NOTES



