ATHENS INSTITUTE

Abstract Book

19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics
6-11 July 2026, Athens, Greece

Edited by
Krasimir Kabakciev & Olga Gkounta

2026

Abstracts
19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics

6-11 July 2026, Athens, Greece

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Preface

This book includes the abstracts of all the papers presented at the *19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics* (6-11 July 2026), organized by the Athens Institute.

A full conference program can be found before the relevant abstracts. In accordance with Athens Institute's Publication Policy, the papers presented during this conference will be considered for inclusion in one of the Athens Institute's many publications only after a blind peer review process.

The purpose of this abstract book is to provide members of the Athens Institute and other academics around the world with a resource through which they can discover colleagues and additional research relevant to their own work. This purpose is in congruence with the overall mission of the association. Athens Institute was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world can meet to exchange ideas on their work and consider the future developments of their fields of study.

To facilitate the communication, a references section includes all the abstract books published as part of this conference (Table 1). I invite the readers to access these abstract books –these are available for free– and compare how the themes of the conference have evolved over the years. According to the Athens Institute's mission, the presenters in these conferences are coming from many different countries, presenting various topics.

Table 1. *Publication of Books of Abstracts of Proceedings, 2010-2026*

Year	Papers	Countries	References
2026	26	16	Kabakciev and Gkounta (2026)
2025	23	15	Kabakciev and Papanikou (2025)
2024	50	27	Kabakciev and Gkounta (2024)
2023	29	13	Spiliotopoulos and Gkounta (2023)
2022	49	22	Spiliotopoulos and Gkounta (2022)
2021	25	17	Papanikos (2021)
2020	26	17	Papanikos (2020)
2019	34	16	Papanikos (2019)
2018	39	21	Papanikos (2018)
2017	38	19	Papanikos (2017)
2016	37	21	Papanikos (2016)
2015	84	31	Papanikos (2015)
2014	67	28	Papanikos (2014)
2013	62	29	Papanikos (2013)
2012	93	37	Papanikos (2012)
2011	126	36	Papanikos (2011)
2010	111	41	Papanikos (2010)

It is our hope that through Athens Institute's conferences and publications, Athens will become a place where academics and researchers from all over the world can regularly meet to discuss the developments of their disciplines and present their work. Since 1995, Athens Institute has organized more than 400 international conferences and has published over 200 books. Academically, the institute is organized into 7 divisions and 37 units. Each unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

For each of these events, the involvement of multiple parties is crucial. I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committees, and most importantly the administration staff of the Athens Institute for putting this conference and its subsequent publications together.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President

Editors' Note

These abstracts provide a vital means to the dissemination of scholarly inquiry in the field of Languages & Linguistics. The breadth and depth of research approaches and topics represented in this book underscores the diversity of the conference.

Athens Institute's mission is to bring together academics from all corners of the world in order to engage with each other, brainstorm, exchange ideas, be inspired by one another, and once they are back in their institutions and countries to implement what they have acquired. The *19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics*, accomplished this goal by bringing together academics and scholars from 16 different countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Finland, Germany, Israel, Jordan, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Taiwan, Türkiye, UK, USA), which brought in the conference the perspectives of many different country approaches and realities in the field.

Publishing this book can help that spirit of engaged scholarship continue into the future. With our joint efforts, the next editions of this conference will be even better. We hope that this abstract book as a whole will be both of interest and of value to the reading audience.

Krasimir Kabakciev & Olga Gkounta
Editors

19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics, 6-11 July 2026, Athens, Greece

Organizing & Scientific Committee

All Athens Institute's conferences are organized by the Academic Council. This conference has been organized with the assistance of the following academic members of Athens Institute.

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

Dr. David Philip Wick, Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute & Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.

Dr. Krasimir Kabakciev, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute.

Dr. Haralambos Symeonidis, Head, Languages & Linguistics Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, University of Kentucky, USA.

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

19th Annual International Conference on Languages & Linguistics, 6-11 July 2026, Athens, Greece

PROGRAM

08:30-09:15
Registration
09:15-10:00 Opening Speech and Welcoming Remarks
Speaker: Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

10:00-11:30 Session 1

Session 1a **Moderator: Krasimir Kabakciev**, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute.	**Session 1b** **Moderator: Thanos Patelis**, Lead Psychometrician, University of Kansas, USA.
1. **Irina Ustinova**, Professor, Southeast Missouri State University, USA. ***Title**: English Influence on Contemporary Russian Youth Slang.* 2. **Marija Liudvika Drazdauskiene**, Professor Emerita, WSB University, University Centre in Warsaw, Poland. ***Title**: The Concept Sidelined in Language Policy and in Practice.* 3. **Hsiao-Yung Wang**, Distinguished Professor, Providence University, Taiwan. ***Title**: Reflecting upon the Formalized Rhetoric in Contemporary Anti-Trans Discourses from Mikhail Bakhtin's Critique of Formalism.* 4. **Nizar Alseoudi**, Associate Professor, Al Hussein Technical University, Jordan. ***Title**: Developing Adult Oral Proficiency in Arabic Language According to ACTFL Standards.*	1. **Burcu Ates**, Professor, Sam Houston State University, USA. **Helen Berg**, Associate Dean, College of Education, Sam Houston State University, USA. ***Title**: Adapting and Moving Forward: Teaching and Supporting Students in Changing Times.* 2. **Nicole Farris**, Professor, East Texas A&M University, USA. ***Title**: Strategies for Inclusive and Resilient Pedagogy.* 3. **Anat Zeira**, Professor Emerita, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. ***Title**: A Gender Perspective of Educational Outcomes among Care Leavers Form Educational and Therapeutic Youth Villages.* 4. **Alejandra Rios Urzua**, Director, Observatory for Inclusion, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. **Carla Andrea Taramasco Toro**, Director, Institute of Technology for Innovation in Health and Wellbeing, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. **Diego Eduardo Robles Cruz**, Research Professor, Institute of Technology for Innovation in Health and Wellbeing, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. **David Alberto Araya Galveza**, Research Professor, Institute of Technology for Innovation in Health and Wellbeing, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. ***Title**: AI Supported Interview Training for Young People with Disabilities: The ELVIR Virtual Trainer.*

11:30-13:00 Session 2

Session 2b – Microsymposium on "TAM (Tense-Aspect-Modality) in and across Languages" **Moderator: Marija Liudvika Drazdauskiene**, Professor Emerita, WSB University, University Centre in Warsaw, Poland.	**Session 2a** **Moderator: Nicole Farris**, Deputy Head, Anthropology & Demography Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, East Texas A&M University, USA.
1. **Krasimir Kabakciev**, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute. ***Title**: On the Specificity of Chinese Aspect against Some Other Languages and the Theoretical Foundations of its Study.* 2. **Shinian Wu**, Professor, Grand Valley State University, USA. ***Title**: Dissecting Aspectual Meaning Across Languages: Perfectivity and Telicity in Mandarin vs. English.* 3. **Cansu Gür**, Assistant Professor, Atatürk University, Türkiye. ***Title**: Mapping Research on Late Sign Language Acquisition: A Bibliometric Analysis.*	1. **Patricia del Carmen Covarrubias-Papahiu**, Professor and Researcher, FES Iztacala, National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico. ***Title**: Research on Curriculum Actors in Mexico: Trends and Contributions to Education.* 2. **Pamela Schmidt**, Professor, Dibble Professorship in Finance/Accounting, Washburn University, USA. ***Title**: Educational Case: Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Investigate Governmental Program Fraud during the COVID-19 Pandemic.* 3. **Thanos Patelis**, Lead Psychometrician, University of Kansas, USA. ***Title**: Comparison of Competency-Based Education in Higher Education between the US and Europe and Other Global Contexts.*

13:00-14:00 Session 3 – A Symposium on "*Rethinking the Mission of the Modern University I*"
Moderator: Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute & Professor (Adjunct), University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

Speakers:

1. **Irina Ustinova**, Professor, Southeast Missouri State University, USA.
   ***Title:** AI For Good and Bad in Teaching and Research.*
2. **Marija Liudvika Drazdauskiene**, Professor Emerita, WSB University, University Centre in Warsaw, Poland.
   ***Title:** A Few Questions when Thinking about Academic Values Today.*
3. **Artur Myna**, Professor, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland.
   ***Title:** Artificial Intelligence: Challenges, Threats, and Opportunities for the Future of the Modern University.*
4. **Thanos Patelis**, Lead Psychometrician, University of Kansas, USA.
   ***Title:** Is The Mission of Institutions of Higher Education Affecting the Closure of Colleges and Universities in the US?*

Interventions:

1. **Krasimir Kabakciev**, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute.
2. **Ziona Strelitz**, Director, ZZA Responsive User Environments, UK.
3. **Ioannis Karadimitropoulos**, Independent Researcher, Germany.
4. **Simona Elena Tomozii**, Associate Professor, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China.
5. **Jane Anastassopoulou**, Retired Professor, National, Technical University of Athens, Greece.
6. **Malama Tsimenis**, Associate Professor, University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada.

14:00-15:00 Lunch

18:00-20:00 Session 4 – Visit Aristotle's Lyceum

This is not a guided tour, and participation in this visit is **not included in any conference registration fee**. **It requires pre-booking.** It includes visits to Aristotle's Lyceum, the Panathenaic Stadium (Kallimarmaro), the National Garden, the statues of Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Euripides, and Syntagma Square, where the tour concludes in front of the Hellenic Parliament. Click here for more details.

20:30-22:30 Athenian Early Evening Symposium (Sequence of Events: Ongoing Academic Discussions, Dinner, Wine and Water, Music, Dance)

Tuesday 7 July 2026

09:00-10:30 Session 5
Moderator: Shinian Wu, Professor, Grand Valley State University, USA.

1. **Cristian Noemi**, Full Professor, Universidad de La Serena, Chile.
   ***Title**: Psychosocial Frameworks of Argumentative Discourse in a Human–Algorithmic Hybrid Ecology.*
2. **Ioannis Karadimitropoulos**, Independent Researcher, Germany.
   ***Title**: Manual and Automated Deterministic Scansion of the Homeric Corpus.*
3. **Qianyu Wang**, Associate Professor, Harbin Institute of Technology, China.
   ***Title**: Justifying the "Trial" on Hester Prynne from the Perspective of Social Rules.*
4. **Xiujie Liu**, Deputy Director, Harbin Institute of Technology, China.
   ***Title**: The Cracks of the Everyday: On Defamiliarization in Alice Munro's Fiction.*

10:30-12:00 Session 6
Moderator: Charoula Gkioka, Senior Academic Advisor, The American College of Greece, Greece.

1. **Elisa Seerig**, Professor, Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS), Brazil.
   Catia de Azevedo Fronza, Professor, Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos), Brazil.
   ***Title**: Literature in the EFL Classroom: Fostering Literary and Critical Literacy in Brazilian and Italian Public Schools.*
2. **Inigo Yanguas**, Professor & Director of Spanish, University of San Diego, USA.
   ***Title**: Culture-Related and Language-Related Episodes in Teletandem: Task-Based vs. Non-Task-Based Conversations.*
3. **Vasiliki Spiliotopoulos**, Associate Professor, University of Ottawa, Canada.
   Jérémie Séror, Professor, University of Ottawa, Canada.
   ***Title**: Innovations in Language, Literacy, and Technology in Canadian Bilingual Higher Education: A Case-Study of Transformative Language Learning in a Diverse and Changing World.*
4. **Jinhua Cheng**, Teacher, Language Centre, University of Helsinki, Finland.
   ***Title**: How Teaching Assistants Support Student Learning in Online and Hybrid Chinese Language Courses.*

12:00-13:30 Session 7
Moderator: Gabriele Magni, Associate Professor & Chair, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Loyola Marymount University, USA.

1. **Joanne McDowell**, Associate Professor, University of Hertfordshire, UK.
   Donald Reid, Lecturer, University of Tasmania, Australia.

Vaughan Cruickshank, Lecturer, University of Tasmania, Australia.
***Title**: Contradictions and Counter-Narratives: A Critical Discourse Analysis Exploring Representations of Male Primary School Teachers in UK and Australian Newspapers.*

2. **Charoula Gkioka**, Senior Academic Advisor, The American College of Greece, Greece.
***Title**: Beyond the Appointment: How Advising Shapes Student Success.*
3. **Patrice Elder**, Tennessee State University, USA.
***Title**: Behind the Ivory Curtain: Uncovering Toxicity in Academic Institutions.*
4. **Malama Tsimenis**, Associate Professor, University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada.
***Title**: Global Stories, Local Encounters: Reflective Inquiry at the Intersection of Language and Community.*

13:30-14:30 Session 8 – A Symposium on "*Rethinking the Mission of the Modern University II*"
Moderator: Krasimir Kabakciev, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute.

Speakers:

1. **Rosalba Pinto**, Professor, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Mexico.
***Title:** Teaching in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Learning to Cross the Looking-Glass Reflections Inspired by Alice's Journey.*
2. **Nicole Farris**, Professor, East Texas A&M University, USA.
***Title:** Student Ready or Readying the Student? Unpacking Policy and Rhetoric Surrounding Higher Education.*
3. **Jackie Di Vito**, Full Professor, HEC Montréal, Canada.
***Title:** Universities at a Turning Point: The Future of Higher Education in an Intelligent Era.*
4. **Clara Germana Gonçalves**, Invited Assistant Professor and Integrated Researcher at CIAUD – Research Center for Architecture, Urbanism, and Design, Lisbon School of Architecture, University of Lisbon, Portugal.
***Title:** The Universal, the Singular, and the Serendipitous: Searching for the Self and Longing for the Unexpected.*

Interventions:

1. **Rogerio Paulo Vieira de Almeida**, Professor, ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal.
2. **James Irwin**, Assistant Professor, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA.
3. **Raluca Stan**, Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA.
4. **Shinian Wu**, Professor, Grand Valley State University, USA.
5. **Irina Ustinova**, Professor, Southeast Missouri State University, USA.

14:30-15:30 Lunch

15:45-19:30 Session 9
Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk

The urban walk ticket is not included as part of your registration fee. It includes transportation costs and the cost to enter the Parthenon and the other monuments on the Acropolis Hill. The urban walk tour includes the broader area of Athens. Among other sites, it includes: Zappion, Syntagma Square, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Ancient Roman Agora and on Acropolis Hill: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and the Parthenon. The program of the tour may be adjusted, if there is a need beyond our control. This is a private event organized by the Athens Institute exclusively for the conference participants.

20:00-22:00
Closing Remarks by Gregory T. Papanikos: "Wine, Words, and Wisdom: An Ancient Athenian Dinner Symposium" followed by an Ancient Athenian Dinner

Wednesday 8 July 2026
An Educational Visit to Selected Islands
or Visiting the Oracle of Delphi

Thursday 9 July 2026
Nafplio & Mycenae Visit

Friday 10 July 2026
Visiting the Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

Saturday 11 July 2026
09:00-10:00 – The Academic Discussion continues in the downtown open agora (close to the Aristotelian Lyceum)

Nizar Alseoudi
Associate Professor, Al Hussein Technical University, Jordan

Developing Adult Oral Proficiency in Arabic Language According to ACTFL Standards

This research aims to develop the oral proficiency of adults in multilingual contexts. Adults need to transition from restricted speaking skills, which are mostly confined to delivering a prepared and memorized oral presentation, to free and improvisational speaking skills that enable them to spontaneously speak Arabic in natural situations without prior preparation. This study will present a new perspective that identifies the most important linguistic functions on which students should be trained. These functions include, but are not limited to description, narration, storytelling, comparison, argumentation (debate), presenting evidence for debates, and discussing abstract and hypothetical topics. This development will be achieved by constructing a theoretical framework that illustrates the method and positioning of this development. Ultimately, this will qualify these adults to use their speaking skills correctly and effectively in practical life. The standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) will be among the most important foundations upon which this research will rely.

Burcu Ates
Professor, Sam Houston State University, USA
&
Helen Berg
Associate Dean, College of Education, Sam Houston State University, USA

Adapting and Moving Forward: Teaching and Supporting Students in Changing Times

Higher education in the United States is going through important policy changes that are affecting how we teach, support students and design programs. In Texas, Senate Bill 17 (SB 17) has led to the removal or restructuring of many initiatives related to diversity, equity and inclusion (Texas Legislature, 2023). This has had a direct impact on faculty work, student support and course design. At the same time, changes at the federal level, including the dismantling of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA), have created uncertainty around leadership, funding, and overall direction (U.S. Department of Education, 2024).

These shifts create real challenges for educator preparation programs and for higher education more broadly. In this presentation, we share examples from our work at a public university in Texas to show how these changes are playing out in practice. We discuss how SB 17 has influenced our teaching, the way we design our courses, and how we support students. We also reflect on how the lack of clear federal guidance affects planning, collaboration, and professional development.

At the same time, we are finding ways to move forward. We have adjusted our courses to better connect with local communities, created opportunities for students to engage in global conversations, and explored new teaching approaches to make learning more accessible and engaging.

This session offers a realistic but hopeful look at the current moment in higher education and highlights the importance of flexibility, collaboration, and staying committed to supporting all students.

Jinhua Cheng
Teacher, Language Centre, University of Helsinki, Finland

How Teaching Assistants Support Student Learning in Online and Hybrid Chinese Language Courses

In recent years, language centres at Finnish universities have been actively exploring innovative methods for language teaching in higher education. With the acceleration of digital transformation, fully online courses and hybrid courses that combine online and in-person learning have received increasing attention. While prior research has primarily focused on instructional design and learning outcomes, less attention has been given to students' experiences and feedback, particularly regarding the role of teaching assistants (TAs) in small group activities, pronunciation and grammar feedback, and cultural instruction. This study examines how TAs support student learning and engagement in these specific areas in online and hybrid Chinese language courses at the University of Helsinki.

Since the fall semester of 2022, the Language Centre has offered fully online and hybrid Chinese courses to meet the needs of different students. While both formats increase flexibility, they also pose challenges related to interaction, participation, and sense of belonging. TAs have played a key role in guiding small group exercises, providing timely pronunciation and grammar feedback, introducing Chinese culture, facilitating interaction between online and in-person students, and supporting digital learning platforms.

To investigate students' learning experiences, we began a survey in 2024, collecting data on students' main engagement methods and feedback on open-ended courses. Qualitative analysis revealed that students consistently highlighted the importance of TAs in leading group exercises, providing immediate language feedback, and introducing cultural content. Their presence increased student confidence in language use and enhanced engagement, particularly for online learners, contributing to overall classroom cohesion. Feedback also emphasized that personalized guidance and encouragement from TAs created a positive and inclusive learning experience in both online and hybrid formats.

Throughout the 2022–2026 academic years, teaching assistants (TAs) maintained their role as facilitators of learning, interaction, and cultural exchange. This research demonstrates that, regardless of whether the course is online or hybrid, TA involvement in group exercises, pronunciation and grammar feedback, and cultural instruction is crucial

for enhancing student learning experiences and course satisfaction. Recognizing and developing this role of TAs contributes to building more effective, inclusive, and student-cantered language learning environments.

Patricia del Carmen Covarrubias-Papahiu
Professor and Researcher, FES Iztacala, National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico

Research on Curriculum Actors in Mexico: Trends and Contributions to Education

The study of curriculum actors emerged as a field of research in the first decade of this century and has become a well-established field of growing interest over the past decade. Its full development is evident in scholarly output published in books, theses, and conference papers, but above all in articles in specialized journals. Research on curriculum actors, while based on different purposes, approaches, and methodologies, tend to focus more on their subjective dimension to understand how they live, experience, interpret, or represent different components of the curriculum in which they participate; thus, most of the research consists of empirical studies using predominantly qualitative methodologies, although quantitative or mixed methodologies are also employed

The purpose of this paper is to present the main lines of research in Mexico focused on curriculum actors, as well as to discuss their most relevant findings and the implications these have for education.

Research on curriculum stakeholders has developed gradually and in diverse ways. It should be noted that this field of study encompasses all stakeholders in education in their relationship with the curriculum, focusing on them as subjects or as specific units of analysis; thus, in addition to teachers and students as the main protagonists of the curriculum, it includes authorities, school leaders, administrators, parents, employers, and, of course, experts in curriculum design and evaluation. However, it is teachers and students who have stood out in scientific research in this field since its inception.

The most representative lines of research generated over the last four decades on students as actors in the curriculum are a) students in the face of educational processes and curricular reforms and innovations; b) student educational trajectories, professional training, and identity; and c) educational inclusion, values, gender, and emotions as cross-cutting themes in the curriculum.

And the main lines of research on teachers as actors in the curriculum are a) the Comprehensive Reform of Basic Education (RIEB); b) curricular practice: teachers' roles and competencies; c) teachers' trajectories and identities; and d) evaluation of teaching and academic productivity.

Among the actions planned for the future regarding students as active participants in the curriculum, in addition to expanding research at the primary and secondary levels and on socio-emotional, ethical, gender equity, and educational aspects, there is a need to implement healthy living programs in the curriculum and address aspects of social responsibility, sustainability, and environmental education—topics that have not been addressed by curriculum research in Mexico with students as the focus of their studies.

And since teachers are the primary actors in curriculum implementation, they face the need to rethink their work, to reinterpret or change their pedagogical beliefs and practices in accordance with new scenarios, which require new competencies on the part of teachers, especially in the planning of educational work and the assessment of learning, as well as the emergence of AI in education.

Marija Liudvika Drazdauskiene
Professor Emerita, WSB University, University Centre in Warsaw, Poland

The Concept Sidelined in Language Policy and in Practice

Whether from major Universities and schools or European Institutions, language teaching policy today focuses socio-political and ethical concepts in EFL and native language education rather than on the language itself. This curious approach to language learning and teaching may be dismissed with the resort to the rule, "Don't trouble trouble…", but scholarly research points to meagre professional qualification, economic constraints and current trends and fashions at the base of such views.

Potentialities of human language, which the body of this paper is designed to reveal, tend to overturn the solely socio-political aspects in language learning for the sake of language education which may alter individual culture of dedicated learners and current cultural practices to restore the culture of the retired generation of philologists and teachers who inherited it from their own teachers enlightened yet in the ideals of the nineteenth century. This holds the idea of fine language.

Reasons for a return to this ideal have been drawn from research into idiomaticity (John Liontas, 2025) and latent meaning (Drazdauskiene, 2025) of language. These studies show that every human language possesses overt or rudimentary meaning and covert or latent meaning, which is inherent in its idioms, collocations, fixed major units, such as formulae, forms of address, stereotypes, clichés, quotations and text/genre forms. Latent meaning remains passive when these units are correctly used and perceived with the required degree of understanding. In contexts in which there appears an unwanted pause, as for example in a reaction to an utterance, *She responded positively and as promptly as a missile heading in on the target*. Or in which a speaker missed a native verbal custom in choosing the title to a personal name, as for example, *I hope you will help us, Miss Janet*, and in similar missteps in the use of modern English. The latent meaning of the units in question becomes activated and exposes the listener's or the speaker's ignorance of customary usage or cultural tradition.

Units of this kind and all historical and stylistically marked words are dangerous to foreign speakers. But these units create the power of language through its latent meaning, which holds all its speakers at its mercy. It is not true that "language does not mean, people do". Language does mean on its own, and every speaker is obliged to mind this power

if he is educated and intelligent. Poets expressed their frustration at this power of language in concrete turns of phrase, by saying, "the intolerable wrestle with words and meanings". This wrestle makes language a training power, too.

The implied approach to remedy the situation is inconceivable today for economic constraints and social policies as for schooling *en masse*. But university students may be made aware of the potentialities and power of language before they graduate, so that they could seek accomplishment on their own. Language learning is endless and fashion driven, but the ancient saying, *Vir bonus dicendi peritas*, has survived to this day among the classicists. The question remains whether we as educators should trouble trouble before…, if it hasn't yet?

Patrice Elder
Educational Consultant, Tennessee State University, USA

Behind the Ivory Curtain: Uncovering Toxicity in Academic Institutions

Toxic behaviors within academic institutions are increasingly recognized as detrimental to faculty well-being, productivity, and institutional culture. These behaviors, including incivility, bullying, microaggressions, and other forms of interpersonal conflict, are shaped by complex demographic, cultural, and institutional factors (Gadegaard et al., 2019). Understanding how demographic characteristics influence faculty perceptions of organizational toxicity is crucial for developing effective interventions and creating more inclusive academic environments. Organizational toxicity refers to situations that reduce employee morale, motivation, self-esteem, and diligence, resulting in emotional pain and permanent damage to organizations (Frost, 2003; Maitlis, 2008). According to the American Psychological Association (2023), 19% of workers describe their workplace as toxic, and those in toxic environments are three times more likely to experience mental health harm than those in healthy workplaces. In higher education, toxic behaviors manifest in various forms, including narcissistic leadership, aggressive interpersonal dynamics, unethical conduct, and rigid organizational structures. These behaviors can significantly affect faculty retention, job satisfaction, and overall institutional effectiveness (Kasalak, 2019). Unique contextual factors may exacerbate these toxic dynamics.

This quantitative study examined the relationship between demographic factors and faculty perceptions of organizational toxicity at four-year higher education institutions. Using the Perceived Organizational Toxicity Scale (POTS), data were collected from 131 faculty members across Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The study investigated four dimensions of toxic behaviors: narcissistic, aggressive, unethical, and rigid behaviors. Key findings revealed that unethical behaviors were the most prevalent form of organizational toxicity ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 1.05$), followed by narcissistic behaviors ($M = 2.32$, $SD = .93$). Significant demographic differences emerged across academic rank and seniority. Assistant and associate professors reported significantly higher levels of aggressive behavior ($M = 2.51$) than research assistants and adjunct professors ($M = 2.03$), $F(2) = 3.28$, $p = .041$. Faculty with 6-10 years of experience reported the highest toxicity levels, while those with

two years or less reported the lowest levels. Faculty with greater seniority showed significantly higher perceptions of unethical behaviors, $F(3,127) = 4.88$, $p = .003$. Racial differences were also significant, with White faculty reporting higher levels of unethical behaviors than Black faculty, $F(2,128) = 3.09$, $p = .049$. The findings demonstrate that organizational toxicity is a systemic issue affecting faculty across all demographics, with unethical behaviors representing the most significant concern.

Nicole Farris
Professor, East Texas A&M University, USA

Strategies for Inclusive and Resilient Pedagogy

Faculty who design courses at the intersections of demography, social change, and inequality often face heightened political and institutional pressures. Drawing on my own teaching experiences, this presentation reflects on strategies for sustaining inclusive and evidence-based pedagogy while adapting to shifting contexts. I highlight how demographic perspectives on population dynamics, family structures, and social stratification can be integrated into curriculum design to foster student engagement and critical thinking. I also discuss approaches to advocating for curricular space, building support among colleagues, and reorganizing course content in ways that balance rigor with sensitivity to external scrutiny. By situating my teaching within broader demographic and sociological frameworks, this presentation contributes a practitioner's perspective on course design and adaptation.

Charoula Gkioka
Senior Academic Advisor, The American College of Greece, Greece

Beyond the Appointment: How Advising Shapes Student Success

Academic advising is frequently conceptualized as an administrative or transactional function within higher education, an obligatory meeting focused on course selection, degree requirements, and institutional procedures. However, emerging research underscores the multifaceted and developmental dimensions of advising, suggesting that its influence extends beyond the boundaries of the scheduled appointment. This research draws on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with undergraduate students at a private, non-profit institution to examine how advising interactions across both physical and virtual environments shape students' academic trajectories, self-efficacy, and broader sense of belonging within the university.

The study is grounded in advising-as-teaching and developmental advising frameworks, which position advising as an educational practice that fosters critical reflection, informed decision-making, and student autonomy. These theoretical foundations inform the analysis of students' narratives, which reveal advising to be a site where academic knowledge, interpersonal support, and institutional navigation intersect. Students consistently characterized effective advising not simply as the provision of information, but as an experience marked by attentiveness, relationality, and continuity. Advisors were perceived as educators, mentors, and institutional mediators who translated policy into practice and helped students articulate academic and personal goals.

A central finding of the study concerns the relational dimension of advising. Participants emphasized that the quality of the advisor–advisee relationship significantly influenced their confidence, motivation, and sense of academic direction. Moments which students described as impactful involved personalized feedback, empathetic listening, and strategic questioning that prompted reflection on strengths, challenges, and future pathways. These relational aspects were reported to be crucial for first-year students, international students, and those in academic difficulty, for whom advising served as a stabilizing and validating experience.

The growing prevalence of online advising adds complexity to these interactions. While students acknowledged the convenience and flexibility of virtual modalities, many stressed that digital environments could not always replicate the immediacy, warmth, or spontaneity of in-

person encounters. Nonetheless, the study also reveals that online advising can successfully support students when advisors adopt intentional communication practices, leverage technology to increase accessibility, and maintain consistent relational presence across modalities. These findings highlight the need for institutions to consider not only the structural logistics of hybrid advising systems, but also the pedagogical and interpersonal practices that sustain meaningful connections in digital spaces.

Ultimately, advising should be understood as a holistic and pedagogical process that plays a critical role in student success. The data demonstrate that advising interactions, whether brief or extended, formal or informal, can profoundly shape students perceptions of their academic capabilities, their understanding of institutional expectations, and their overall engagement in the learning environment. By foregrounding student voices, this study contributes to broader discussions about the evolving function of advising in contemporary higher education and underscores the importance of cultivating advising practices that are developmentally oriented, relationally grounded, and adaptable to both physical and virtual contexts. In doing so, it invites educators, administrators, and policymakers to reconsider advising not merely as an operational requirement, but as a vital educational practice with the capacity to guide, empower, and transform students' academic journeys.

Cansu Gür
Assistant Professor, Atatürk University, Türkiye

Mapping Research on Late Sign Language Acquisition: A Bibliometric Analysis

Research on late sign language acquisition has attracted increasing attention because of its relevance for understanding the effects of delayed language exposure on deaf individuals. Although a growing body of work has examined this topic, a structured overview of the field remains limited. This study aims to map research on late sign language acquisition through a bibliometric analysis, focusing on publication patterns and general research trends.

Data were collected from the Web of Science Core Collection using predefined search criteria designed to identify publications related to sign language acquisition under conditions of delayed language exposure. The initial search yielded 90 records. After a stricter relevance-based screening process, only publications directly related to late sign language acquisition were retained, resulting in a final dataset of 37 publications. The dataset was then analyzed bibliometrically in terms of publication trends over time, main publication venues, recurring authors, citation patterns, and keyword distributions.

The findings show that research on late sign language acquisition remains a relatively small but growing field. Publication activity becomes more visible after 2020, suggesting increased recent interest in the topic. The literature is distributed across interdisciplinary venues rather than being concentrated in a single outlet, and citation patterns indicate that a limited number of highly cited publications have played a strong shaping role in the field. The keyword profile also points to the prominence of age of acquisition within the dataset.

Overall, this study provides a structured overview of Web of Science-indexed research on late sign language acquisition and highlights the main publication tendencies within this specialized but expanding area of inquiry.

Krasimir Kabakciev
Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute

On the Specificity of Chinese Aspect against Some Other Languages and the Theoretical Foundations of its Study

The presentation is to grow into an article co-authored by Wu and Kabakčiev describing Chinese aspect vis-à-vis the cross-language realization of aspect. First, a description is made of how aspect is realized in the Balkansprachbund languages – to demonstrate some of the ways aspect is effectuated as a universal category found in two manifestations typologically: verbal, compositional. In the Balkansprachbund, there are verbal-aspect and compositional-aspect languages, with differences in need of description. There is no doubt that aspect in Chinese is verbal – like in Slavic, Greek, Georgian, Kurdish, etc., but with a specific realization: use of a postverbal perfectivizing particle *-le*, a separate word, not a perfectivizing affix as in the above-mentioned verbal-aspect languages. Compositional aspect was discovered six decades ago on Germanic languages (Verkuyl 1971; 1993; see Kabakčiev 2000; 2023) and is also found in the Romance languages, Finnish, Albanian (Haxhillari 2024), Turkish (Kutsarova 2025), etc. Compositional aspect is not effectuated at the VP level – something maintained by certain researchers who fail to understand that aspect is realized at the sentence level only (Verkuyl 1999), not at the VP- or V-level. The wrong conceptualization of aspect as residing at the VP-level is detrimental for linguistics and leads aspectology astray. It is true that aspect can be realized by verbs at the V-level, but this is verbal aspect, a phenomenon effectuated by a mechanism different from compositional aspect. Second, the paper explores the theoretical foundations for an adequate conceptualization of Chinese aspect and suggests ways to overcome problems arising in certain descriptions. As evidenced in two brand-new papers (Niu 2026; Ryan & Wang 2026), some analyses of Chinese aspect are based on an incorrect understanding of aspect, with no account taken of the two separate forms of its effectuation: verbal, compositional. In the planned paper, the first author will cover the description and interpretation of Chinese data; the second the theoretical framework for an adequate description of aspect.

Ioannis Karadimitropoulos
Independent Researcher, Germany

Manual and Automated Deterministic Scansion of the Homeric Corpus

Divergences between grammatical and prosodic metric values of the same syllable, poetic license, and synizesis are often cited as reasons to avoid engagement with Homeric prosody. This study develops a deterministic model for the manual scansion of the Homeric corpus requiring only basic knowledge of long, short, and dual syllables. Scansion is not based on subjective or ad hoc judgment but on explicit, concrete, prosodic imperative rules based on the developed simple prosody's arithmetic that predefines the general prosodic form of any verse.

The prosodic imperative bridges apparent divergences between grammatical and prosodic rules and, for training purposes, extends long, short, and dual syllables according to their prosodic tendencies while taking the surrounding syllables into account. All prosodic operations are fully justified and explained.

The model introduces an empirical and improvable *Minimum Metric Error*, allowing the isolation of the optimal solution when multiple valid solutions exist.

An accompanying C# tool implements the model, generating the prosody of any rhapsody within seconds and producing multiple statistical outputs.

Xiujie Liu
Deputy Director, Harbin Institute of Technology, China

The Cracks of the Everyday: On Defamiliarization in Alice Munro's Fiction

Defamiliarization, a core concept of Russian formalism, refers to the artistic technique of making the familiar appear strange, thereby prolonging aesthetic perception and restoring a vivid experience of life. Alice Munro's short stories draw on the mundane details of daily life, yet they generate a lasting and complex emotional resonance. Employing the theory of Shklovsky's theory of defamiliarization as a framework, this paper analyzes the narrative strategies in three of Munro's representative works. It finds that Munro does not simply apply conventional techniques, rather, she creates an aesthetic of "everyday defamiliarization" through the self-limitation of omniscient perspective, the juxtaposition of events instead of causal sequencing, and the suspension rather than closure of endings. These strategies force readers to re-examine familiar interpersonal relations and moral dilemmas, while refusing to provide definitive answers, thereby highlighting the irreducible complexity of life itself. The paper argues that Munro's defamiliarization is not formalist virtuosity but a profound response to the question of how fiction should tell the truth.

Joanne McDowell
Associate Professor, University of Hertfordshire, UK
Donald Reid
Lecturer, University of Tasmania, Australia
&
Vaughan Cruickshank
Lecturer, University of Tasmania, Australia

Contradictions and Counter-Narratives: A Critical Discourse Analysis Exploring Representations of Male Primary School Teachers in UK and Australian Newspapers

The representation of male primary school teachers in British and Australian newspapers is a topic of increasing importance, given the ongoing discussions surrounding gender equality in education and broader societal perceptions of men in caregiving roles. In this paper, we argue that media representations play a crucial role in shaping societal perceptions and attitudes towards gender roles and men in teaching. This paper aims to provide a critical analysis of how the media discusses and portrays primary school teachers, focusing on the discourses, themes, and underlying ideologies present in their representations. To achieve this, we examine the discourse surrounding male primary school teachers in newspapers from the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) from 2020 to 2023. The findings highlight persistent gender biases and suggest the need for more nuanced and balanced representations of male teachers in the media.

Cristian Noemi
Full Professor, Universidad de La Serena, Chile

Psychosocial Frameworks of Argumentative Discourse in a Human–Algorithmic Hybrid Ecology

The present study analyzes the psychosocial frameworks of argumentative discourse within the hybrid ecology composed of human speakers (HS) and artificial intelligence systems (AI).

Drawing on Hample's (2005) theoretical model and the empirical data obtained from an attitudinal-scale instrument applied to both discursive sources, the activation of twelve psychosocial dimensions is examined.

The results show that AI exhibits high levels of cooperation (98.9%), usefulness (68%), and professional contrast (73.2%), whereas HS show greater activation of argumentativity (30.9%), civility (30.9%), identity (17%), and dominance (16%).

These findings make it possible to describe a functional discursive rationality in AI and an ethical rationality in HS, shaping a new form of communicative interaction in the algorithmic era.

Thanos Patelis
Lead Psychometrician, University of Kansas, USA

Comparison of Competency-Based Education in Higher Education between the US and Europe and Other Global Contexts

This presentation and accompanying paper compare the prevalence and definitions of competency-based education (CBE) in higher education in the United States, Europe, and other global contexts, as well as the factors that influence its implementation.

Prevalence of CBE

In the US, CBE is growing but remains partial and uneven. CBE adoption efforts span all institution types in increasing numbers, but the adoption remains piecemeal. Most institutions view CBE as a mechanism for advancing specific institutional goals, but not a comprehensive institutional transformation. Even though the program counts continue to increase in the US, they serve relatively small numbers of students/learners (AIR, 2020). Globally, adoption is emerging, but the programs differ and are highly variable across regions. CBE is a novel framework globally with adoption differing significantly across institutions and continents (OECD, 2020). The reasons for adoption vary (e.g., workforce alignment, flexibility, lifelong learning), as well as the implemental models across countries. Systematic data collection and reporting are sparse globally making it difficult to have a reliable accounting of the prevalence of CBE globally.

Definition of CBE

In the US, competency-based education (CBE) in higher education is a learner-centered, outcomes-driven model in which students progress by demonstrating mastery of explicitly defined competencies—measurable knowledge, skills, and abilities—through rigorous, criterion-referenced assessments. Unlike time-based systems, CBE organizes curriculum, instruction, and credentialing around demonstrated performance, enabling flexible pacing, transparency of expectations, and alignment with workforce and societal needs (C-BEN, 2017; AIR, 2020). However, the definitions in European and global bodies differ from the US. European and global bodies emphasize holistic competence, learning outcomes, and alignment with qualification

frameworks (OECD, 2018; 2005; 2020; European Parliament & Council, 2008; European Commission, 2017; CEDEFOP, 2017; WHO, 2013; 2020; UNESCO-IBE, 2013; 2017; UNESCO, 2015; Bologna Working Group, 2005; EHEA Ministerial Communiques, 1999-2020) rather than time-independent progression. The US model for CBE is structural and disruptive of current higher education systems. The European/Global model is integrative in learning outcomes and existing structures.

Factors Influencing CBE Implementation

The factors that influence CBE implementation in higher education in the US include (1) institutions leadership, strategy, and change management, (2) faculty motivation, engagement, and training, (3) assessment systems, fidelity, and evidence of mastery, (4) program design and curriculum mapping, and (5) operational and structural readiness. These factors vary in their institutional influence as institutions choose different elements of implementation science and CBE design resulting in highly variable CBE implementation (Kellogg, 2018; Chen et al., 2024; UMC CILSS, 2014). Unlike the US, where CBE is a structural change to education, European and most global CBE initiatives are a curriculum modernization effort, emphasizing competency-based learning outcomes. The factors that influence CBE implementation in higher education in Europe and globally are (1) policy and qualification framework alignment (e.g., European Qualifications Framework, EQF), (2) curriculum and learning-outcomes reform, (3) professional and sector-specific competency frameworks, (4) institutional capacity and change management, (5) stakeholder engagement and social legitimacy, (6) assessment and quality assurance systems, (7) digital and technological infrastructure, and (8) national and regional policy priorities (European Parliament & Council, 2008; Bologna Working Group, 2005; OECD, 2018; CEDEFOP, 2017; WHO, 2013; UNESCO-IBE, 2017.

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AI Supported Interview Training for Young People with Disabilities: The ELVIR Virtual Trainer

People with disabilities face persistent barriers to accessing employment opportunities worldwide. In Chile, approximately 17.6% of the adult population lives with some form of disability, and nearly 61% of them do not participate in the formal labor market, representing more than 1.6 million people excluded from employment. Within this context, preparing for job interviews constitutes a critical stage in many transition-to-employment and employability programs.

Interview preparation is commonly supported by specialists through workshops or guided sessions that help participants develop communication strategies, respond questions, identify and communicate personal strengths, and manage interview situations. However, the limited availability of professional support often restricts opportunities for repeated practice and individualized feedback—two elements that are crucial for developing confidence and effective communication during real recruitment processes.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence, particularly in large language models, have enabled the development of interactive learning environments capable of generating natural conversational interactions. Although several tools have emerged to simulate job interviews, most operate as simple question–answer systems based on predefined scenarios, offering limited support for competency-based learning, progressive skill development, or supervised training processes integrated into inclusion programs.

This paper presents **ELVIR**, an artificial intelligence–based virtual trainer designed to support the development of interview skills in young people with disabilities. The platform was developed through a co-

design process with rehabilitation specialists from Teletón Chile, a non-profit rehabilitation network that provides comprehensive medical, therapeutic, and social support to children and young people with disabilities across the country and plays a key role in their educational and social inclusion. Specialists from this institution participated in a series of collaborative workshops aimed at identifying the key competencies required during job interviews and the main challenges experienced by participants in real recruitment processes. Based on this collaboration, a competency model was defined to structure the training sessions within the platform.

Rather than operating as a simple interview simulator, ELVIR functions as a competency-based training environment that enables progressive skill development through adaptive interview scenarios. The system adjusts the complexity of questions according to user performance, records each training session, and generates automated feedback on communication and self-presentation skills. These evaluations can then be reviewed by specialists to support guided learning and monitor participant progress over time.

The main contribution of this work lies in reframing AI-based interview tools from static simulation systems into AI-assisted learning environments oriented toward competency development. By integrating adaptive interaction, automated formative evaluation, and specialist supervision within a single platform, the proposed approach illustrates how generative AI can support structured employability training and offers a scalable model for strengthening inclusive transition-to-employment programs for people with disabilities.

Pamela Schmidt
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Educational Case: Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Investigate Governmental Program Fraud during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming how businesses operate, make decisions, and deliver value—making it essential for tomorrow's professionals to understand its power and limitations. College students must not only learn how to **effectively prompt and collaborate with AI tools** but also develop **ethical judgment** to use AI tools responsibly. Equally important is the ability to **detect AI-generated content** and **critically evaluate its accuracy, benefits, and risks.** Learning AI-related skills will prepare future business leaders to harness AI wisely, creatively, and with responsibly.

This case presents an experiential learning exercise utilizing AI tools in performing data analysis to investigate financial fraud within the setting of a governmental benefits program. The case utilizes the real-world experiences in the USA's State of Kansas early in the 2020-2021 COVID pandemic when state and federal unemployment payment programs in the USA were rapidly expanded to support US citizens. These new programs were the target of many opportunistic fraudsters who exploited these swift and beneficial government actions meant to provide unemployment payments to deserving workers. In the hast to setup new unemployment benefits programs, the typical control mechanisms were overlooked or under-designed and poorly implemented, offering numerous opportunities for the undeserving to perpetrate fraud. This real-world situation and surprising outcomes provide a compelling context for students to understand and wherein to develop and practice AI prompting skills to combat opportunistic fraudsters.

This real-world evidence-based educational case can be used in a wide range of business courses such as Accounting IS, Auditing or Data Analysis or in an interdisciplinary context where AI skills are to be developed. Some key learnings from the case could include a) learning about the capabilities of Artificial Intelligence and key guidance for effectively guiding AI with logical progressive prompting, b) to offer hands on data analysis experience using AI tools to identify suspicious entries and patterns in datasets, c) to illustrate the negative outcomes from rushing computer code changes and oversights in the failure to

implement controls as well as the failure to keep IT Infrastructure up to current technology standards, c) to help students to understand USA state and federal government benefits programs during the COVID pandemic. This case offers insight into fraud and forensic investigations using Data Analytics methods to study benefits' program datasets. Two approaches to learning can be used in this case: students can audit a provided dataset for potential fraud and report on patterns they find suspicious. Secondly, in advanced upper division courses, it is recommended for students to study and then use AI Prompting to generate their own sample fraud dataset. Both approaches will enhance their ability to craft appropriate AI Prompts, better understand fraud investigations and gain experience analyzing datasets. This case can be extended using official State of Kansas public audit reports online and students can review a podcast from of State of Kansas the Legislative Post Audit government organization.

Elisa Seerig
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&
Catia de Azevedo Fronza
Professor, Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos), Brazil

Literature in the EFL Classroom: Fostering Literary and Critical Literacy in Brazilian and Italian Public Schools

This presentation discusses selected findings from a completed PhD study in Applied Linguistics that investigated the presence and pedagogical use of literary texts in English classes in public high schools in Brazil and Italy. The study emerges from a context in which literature has often been marginalised in English language teaching, particularly in Brazil, where the most recent national curricular guidelines for basic education provide limited encouragement for the use of literary texts in foreign language classrooms (Brasil, 2018). In addition, heterogeneous levels of language proficiency among students, limited weekly hours dedicated to English, and teachers' unfamiliarity with strategies for working with literature frequently lead to the avoidance of literary texts in classroom practice (Santos, 2015; Cardoso, 2021). Despite this scenario, research has increasingly highlighted the pedagogical potential of literature in language education. However, empirical studies focusing specifically on the use of literary texts in public high school contexts remain relatively scarce in Brazil (Garcia, 2017; Viana & Zyngier, 2019) and internationally (Bloemert et al., 2020; Sirico, 2021). Grounded in Sociocultural Historical Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and drawing on the concept of literary literacy (Cosson, 2015), the study developed teaching sequences designed to engage students with literary texts as aesthetic and interpretive experiences rather than primarily as objects of linguistic analysis. The pedagogical design included pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities aimed at encouraging interpretive engagement and written response. In Brazil, the project also required the integration of digital mediation strategies due to the synchronous online teaching format imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis presented here focuses on students' written productions generated from reading activities. Data derive from classroom interventions conducted in 2021 in Brazilian public schools and in 2023 in Italian educational contexts. Findings suggest that engagement with literary texts can foster both literary literacy and critical literacy, encouraging students to produce more reflective and subjective forms of written expression in the

foreign language. These written productions reveal how literary reading may create opportunities for learners to articulate personal experiences and perspectives in English, connecting with Vygotsky's concept of *perezhivanie*, understood as lived experience mediated through language (Lantolf & Swain, 2019). The study therefore highlights the potential of literature to function as a meaningful mediational tool in EFL learning and underscores the importance of supporting teachers in integrating literary texts into classroom practice.

Vasiliki Spiliotopoulos
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&
Jérémie Séror
Professor, University of Ottawa, Canada

Innovations in Language, Literacy, and Technology in Canadian Bilingual Higher Education: A Case-Study of Transformative Language Learning in a Diverse and Changing World

This paper explores innovations in language, literacy and technology at the University of Ottawa, the world's largest English-French bilingual university in the world. Following a brief overview of the institution's history and mission, the paper reports on the distinctive bilingual delivery models developed for a majority of the university's degree programs, with particular attention to the university immersion stream (Knoerr & Weinberg, 2022) and its embedded academic biliteracy initiatives (Berniz & Miller, 2017; Breuer, et al., 2021; Hornberger, 2022; Séror & Spiliotopoulos, in press). These initiatives pair content courses with customized credit-bearing adjunct language courses designed to support discipline-specific receptive and productive biliteracy skills development, while also encouraging students to draw on their non-official home language(s).

Drawing on case study data from university immersion courses taught in fields such as Economics, Communications, Business, and Engineering as well as on institutional data, the paper examines the unique affordances and challenges of this approach to advanced bilingualism. In particular, it considers how concerted efforts to simultaneously develop content and language learning. Particular attention is given to the impact of recent transformative technologies for language learning on these initiatives, including the contributions of artificial intelligence to language education (Séror, 2026), as well as the emergence of fully online and hybrid modes of course delivery (Nissen, 2019).

Findings illustrate how these technological innovations have contributed to the deployment of the university's immersion approach and students' French-English biliteracy development and long term academic success while also supporting growing efforts to better acknowledge and value the additional languages and literacies students bring to their courses and the powerful crosslinguistic work this enables (Ballinger et al., 2017; Ballinger et al., 2020; Coyle et al., 2023; Mayr, 2021).

Implications explore the specific strategies that can guide the implementation of institution wide bi/plurilingual pedagogy initiatives mediated through modern digital technologies (Cappello & Ojeda, 2024). Emphasis is placed on the central role of faculty development, curriculum alignment, and the role of academic leadership. Importantly, the role of policy is also addressed as a key catalyst for developing and supporting partnerships and resource development of immersion programs as valuable avenues to both safeguard and foster French in Canada as a minority language, while at the same time addressing the academic needs of an increasingly pluricultural, plurilingual and diverse student population within Canadian higher education.

Malama Tsimenis
Associate Professor, University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada

Global Stories, Local Encounters: Reflective Inquiry at the Intersection of Language and Community

This presentation reports on a community-engaged experiential learning initiative implemented in an advanced French oral communication course at the University of Toronto Scarborough, connecting global Francophone issues with local realities in Toronto. Titled *Francophone Voices: Connecting Global Issues with Local Realities in Toronto*, the project integrated a speaker series featuring Francophone professionals and community leaders working in areas such as healthcare, immigration, education, and social justice.

Through roundtables and interactive workshops conducted in French, students engaged directly with members of Toronto's diverse Francophone communities. These exchanges provided opportunities for authentic language use while exposing students to the intersections between global Francophone identities and local lived experiences, including issues of language access, social equity, and community advocacy.

A key component of the initiative was structured reflective inquiry. Through guided discussions and applied activities, students connected the perspectives shared by speakers to broader social and linguistic themes. This process supported the development of intercultural awareness and encouraged critical engagement with the role of language in shaping community experiences.

The presentation will examine the pedagogical framework of the initiative and share key insights from its implementation. It will also discuss strategies for building sustainable partnerships with local Francophone organizations in an anglophone context. Overall, it will highlight how community-engaged experiential learning, supported by reflective inquiry, can enrich language education and foster meaningful connections between universities and the communities they serve.

Irina Ustinova
Professor, Southeast Missouri State University, USA

English Influence on Contemporary Russian Youth Slang

Two notable and controversial trends characterize the contemporary sociolinguistic landscape in Russia. The Russian Parliament has recently introduced a bill aimed at restricting the use of foreign words, particularly Anglicisms, in billboards, advertisements, and product information. In contrast, among younger Russians, English retains a strong association with prestige, modernity, and individual self-expression, as evidenced by the widespread incorporation of Russian-English mix in their communication practices. An analysis of over 500 samples of Russian youth lingo provides valuable insights into the mechanisms driving linguistic innovation and the diverse mechanisms behind word formation. English plays a prominent role in morphological processes such as acronym formation, abbreviation, clipping, blending, compounding, affixation, borrowing, conversion, onomatopoeia, reduplication, analogy, neologism creation, and creative respelling. In conclusion, the linguistic practices of Russian youth reflect a creative integration of English, influenced by English morphology, semantics, pragmatics, and even syntax, which has become increasingly concise and fragmented. This English-Russian youth discourse constructs a social and cultural milieu where high self-esteem and success emerge as central values.

An analysis of more than 500 examples of Russian youth slang provides valuable insight into the mechanisms that drive linguistic innovation in this environment. The data reveal a wide range of word-formation processes in which English plays a prominent role. These include acronym formation, abbreviation, clipping, blending, compounding, affixation, borrowing, conversion, onomatopoeia, reduplication, analogy, the creation of neologisms, and various forms of creative respelling. In many cases, English lexical material is adapted to Russian grammatical and morphological patterns, producing hybrid forms that are both linguistically innovative and socially meaningful.

In conclusion, the linguistic practices of Russian youth demonstrate a highly creative integration of English elements. This hybrid discourse reflects the influence of English morphology, semantics, pragmatics, and even syntax, which often appears more concise and fragmented in digital communication. Ultimately, this

English-Russian youth discourse constructs a distinctive social and cultural milieu in which values such as self-confidence, individuality, and success occupy a central place.

Hsiao-Yung Wang
Distinguished Professor, Providence University, Taiwan

Reflecting upon the Formalized Rhetoric in Contemporary Anti-Trans Discourses from Mikhail Bakhtin's Critique of Formalism

This paper aims to analyze the formalized rhetoric of contemporary anti-trans discourses through Mikhail Bakhtin's commentaries on formalism; thereby elaborating the theoretical possibilities and rationale for producing counter rhetoric against anti-trans formations. The first stage involves a reviewing of Bakhtin's writings on formalism, from which the paper identifies five key mechanisms that underpin his "antiformalist rhetoric," namely **instrumentalization**, **standardization**, **monotonization**, **officialization**, and **detemporalization**. These five dimensions constitute the research's core problematization, theoretical foundation, and analytical framework, while also providing a systematic synthesis of the relevant literature.

Methodologically, the study employs **discourse analysis**, focusing on **systematic academic researches on anti-trans discourses** as its primary material. Building upon Bakhtin's "antiformalist rhetoric", the analysis examines how contemporary anti-trans discourses develop a formalized style that often revolves around five recurring argumentative tropes: **phallocentric guilt, categorical differentiation, child-protectionism, extinctionism, and invasionism**.

Based on these findings, the paper argues that understanding the **formalized rhetoric of anti-trans discourse**s enables us to further theorize **how trans-affirmative rhetorical practices attempt to destabilize the injurious effects of such discourse** in both academic and public contexts.

Qianyu Wang
Associate Professor, Harbin Institute of Technology, China

Justifying the "Trial" on Hester Prynne from the Perspective of Social Rules

The punishment sentenced on Hester for her adultery deed in *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne has aroused great interest of scholars in the world since it was delivered in 1850. Her trial, and especially her fate due to it and following it arouses great sympathy from both the readers and critics as they hold what Hester did is out of human nature and human need and the punishment was severe. However, from the ethical, religious, and legal aspects, upon which an ordered community or a balanced society is built, her deed should be tried so as to answer the call for justice among citizens and authority of administration. The paper tries to defense the trial on Hester since her adultery deed did disturb the social balance, challenging ethical cords, religious doctrines and legal forbiddingness. However, it seems the trial is not totally correct according to Hester's defense and "A"'s new meaning. The paper while analyzing them provides Hawthorn's trial as evidence of the rightness of the trial on Hester. Also, the paper explores the relationship between ethics, religion and law, and their evolvement in the process, and the solution of Hester's tragic in modern time.

Shinian Wu
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Dissecting Aspectual Meaning Across Languages: Perfectivity and Telicity in Mandarin vs. English

Verb aspect in languages denotes general temporal relations conveyed by a combination of factors in a sentence: a verb for a particular type and length of action, a noun phrase as the agent of the action (nominative), a second noun phrase as a recipient of the action (accusative), and a point in time or a duration of time that delimits the scope of the action. However, such a generic grammatical description fails to capture the complex interactions between various tense and aspectual forms and functions of the verb on the one side and specific participating constituents on the other side to precisely point to the temporal nature of the action in languages: whether the action has started, is ongoing, has ended, or has even occurred. While English can parse out perfectivity and telicity of a verb through the use of inflectional morphemes, a morphology-free language like Mandarin must resort to lexical and phrasal structures to manage temporal relations of its verbs to participating constituents. The question, therefore, arises as to whether or how Mandarin as an uninflected language shares semantic universality with English as an inflected language. As verbs are central to understanding how sentences perform actions as a universal feature in all languages, this presentation examines how Mandarin verbs convey time concepts non-morphologically as opposed to English with a rich aspectual system as well as the extent to which the two languages express nuanced differences in time concepts through their verb phrase configurations. Other European and non-European languages are also referenced in the analysis.

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Culture-Related and Language-Related Episodes in Teletandem: Task-Based vs. Non-Task-Based Conversations

This study explores the dynamics of culture-related episodes (CREs), language-related episodes (LREs), and interactional patterns in virtual exchanges (also known as Teletandem) among intermediate Spanish learners at a small, private higher education institution in the southwestern United States. It aims to determine whether the type of conversational task (open-ended vs. task-based) influences the nature and frequency of these discourse features. While virtual exchanges have grown in popularity across institutions and have demonstrated potential benefits for language development and intercultural competence, there is limited research on how task design may shape learner interactions in these settings.

Participants in the study were enrolled in two intact sections of a third-semester Spanish course. Over the course of the semester, all students participated in eight synchronous, one-on-one 30-minute video conversations with native Spanish-speaking partners at a Mexican higher-education institution. They were divided into two groups: one engaged in open-ended conversations on textbook-related topics, while the other completed structured pedagogical tasks aligned with the same topics. All video sessions were recorded for students who consented to be included in the study. Furthermore, at the beginning and end of the semester, students completed a series of in-class online questionnaires. In session one, they filled out the Bilingual Language Profile (Birdsong et al., 2012) and a motivation and attitudes survey (Perez-Vidal, 2014). After completing all sessions, participants repeated the motivation survey and responded to a post-exchange reflection survey (Yanguas, 2020). While the video conversations formed part of the course curriculum, participation in the surveys was voluntary. Students who opted out of the research component completed reflective writing assignments in place of the surveys.

The analysis for this presentation focuses on six dyads in total—three from each task group—and includes two sessions per dyad. Conversations are currently being analyzed for the frequency and nature of LREs, CREs, and broader interactional features such as turn-taking, sustained discourse, and negotiation of meaning. At the conference, preliminary results will be presented and pedagogical implications discussed based on the literature and on the experiences and questions

presented by the audience. This research contributes to our understanding of how interactional and cultural dimensions of L2 development unfold in virtual exchanges, highlighting the role of task type in shaping learner discourse and engagement.

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A Gender Perspective of Educational Outcomes among Care Leavers Form Educational and Therapeutic Youth Villages

Background: Numerous studies across Western countries have documented poorer educational achievements (EA) upon leaving care and much lower participation rates of care leavers in post-secondary education (PSE) compared to their same-age peers in the general population. Most studies on care leavers that analyze educational attainments by gender show that while in care and afterward, men are at particular risk of poorer outcomes. Enhancing educational outcomes of youth in care is a central task for out of home care agencies. Here, we focus on secondary-school EA and enrollment to PSE. We examined differences between care leavers and their same-age matched peers; differences between males and females; and interaction effects of study group and gender.

Objectives: The study has two main objectives. The first objective is to compare secondary school educational attainment (EA at age 18) and enrollment in postsecondary education (PSE) between: (1) study groups (care leavers versus their same-age matched peers); (2) gender (men versus women); and (3) study groups by gender (to determine whether study group effects differ between the two genders). The second objective is to predict secondary school EA (at age 18) and PSE enrollment by study group, gender, and study group by gender interaction, controlling for a set of potential confounders. **Methods:** This quasi-experimental study is based on an integrated longitudinal administrative data file created by the researchers in collaboration with the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS). Drawing on this administrative longitudinal data we examined 16 consecutive birth cohorts (1982-1997) of alumni of educational (n=21,654) and therapeutic (n=3,765) residential care facilities in Israel and same-age doubled-sized matched comparison groups from the rest of the general population (n=43,308; n=7,530, respectively). All analyses were conducted separately for educational youth villages and for therapeutic youth villages (and their matched peers). Multi-variate analyses were performed to predict EA and PSE.

Results and Conclusions: Disparities between care leavers and their matched peers were evident in both residential settings studied and, in both EA and PSE, with much larger differences for therapeutic youth

villages. A gender gap in educational outcomes was found among care leavers and their matched peers and across the two residential settings, with females outperforming males. Yet, multi-variate analyses reveal a complex picture. Our findings show that gender plays an important role in academic achievements. We suggest to further investigate gender differences in academic achievements among care leavers. For example, the role of pre-care academic achievements and differential educational expectations. We also suggest to explore what drives larger academic disparities among female care leavers and their peers not in care, and specifically, unique vulnerabilities of females entering the care system.

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