

2024 CEL/ELC CONFERENCE BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY (UBB)

**CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA
28th-29th NOVEMBER 2024**

**MULTILINGUALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION
-current perspectives and emergent issues-**

THE FACULTY OF EUROPEAN STUDIES

no. 1 Em. de Martonne Street

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

2024 CEL/ELC CONFERENCE
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY (UBB), CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA
28th-29th NOVEMBER 2024

MULTILINGUALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION
-current perspectives and emergent issues-

Day 1

28th NOVEMBER

VENUE: THE FACULTY OF EUROPEAN STUDIES

No. 1 Em. de Martonne St., Cluj-Napoca

ROOM SIMONE VEIL

13.30-14.00 Registration

14.00-14.30 Welcome addresses: **Rareș MOLDOVAN** (Dean of the Faculty of Letters, UBB), **Maria Teresa ZANOLA** (CEL/ELC President)

14.30-15.15 Chair: **Elena PĂCURAR**

Plenary address: **Manuel Célio CONCEIÇÃO**. *Multilingualism in research: hindering development or advancing knowledge*

15.15-15.30 Coffee break

15.30-16.45 Panel 1 - Chair: Roma Kriaučiūnienė

15.30-15.45 Anna Becker & Yelena Zakharova. *English Medium of Instruction, language policies, and internationalization at Polish Higher Education institutions*

15.45-16.00 Özge Özoğul. *Learning from foreign researchers' multilingualism in Higher Education*

16.00-16.15 Alina Oltean-Cîmpean. *Attitudes towards multilingual practices in the classroom at BBU: a case study*

16.15-16.30 Q&A

16:30-17.00 Coffee break

17.00-18.00 General Assembly

18.15 Dinner at the “Piramida” University Restaurant (offered by the host institution)

Wine tasting session (offered by JIDVEI Winery)

Day 2

29th NOVEMBER

VENUE: THE FACULTY OF EUROPEAN STUDIES

No. 1 Em. de Martonne St., Cluj-Napoca

ROOM CLUB

9.00-10.00 Panel 2 – Chair: Vilma Bijeikienė

9.00-9.15 Björn Kjellgren. *Navigating the sea of EU English: challenges and realities of promoting plurilingual competence in a European university alliance*

9.15-9.30 Christine Engelen, Adélie Michelland, Maxime Peeters. *Multilingualism in YUFE: how do students react & act?*

9.30-9.45 Nathalie Kirchmeyer, Ida Pinho. *Multilingualism at a technical university – opportunities and challenges*

9.45-10.00 Q&A

10.00-10.15 Coffee break

10.15-11.30 Panel 3 – Chair: Diana Cotrău

10.15-10.30 Frank van Splunder. *(Re)Considering multilingual competence in Higher Education. recent developments in the Dutch-language area*

10.30-10.45 Ioana Mudure-Iacob. *Idioms teaching and acquisition through the filter of multilingualism and multimodality: negotiation meaning via code-switching and trans-languaging*

10.45-11.00 Teija Natri. *The framework of multilingual and intercultural communication competence: Pedagogical Tool for Learners*

11.00-11.15 Oana Papuc. *Collecting language biographies and unearthing learner needs in the creation of ESP study packs and course content*

11.15-11.30 Q&A

11.30-12.00 Coffee break

12.00-13.00 Roundtable ***Multilingualism in Higher Education: emergent issues***

Kris PEETERS, Javier MARTOS, Ștefan OLTEAN, Liana POP, Anamaria LUPAN (in English and French)

Moderator: Elena Păcurar

13.15 Report of the conference: Roma KRIAUCIŪNIENĖ

Concluding remarks: Diana COTRĂU, Elena PĂCURAR

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Panel 1

Anna Becker & Yelena Zakharova. *English Medium of Instruction, language policies, and internationalization at Polish Higher Education institutions*

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English has risen to the status of *lingua franca* in many non-English-speaking countries, and its use, especially among speakers of other languages, is increasing. This is particularly true for higher education settings and international students relying on English-medium-instruction (EMI) to successfully offer and conduct study abroad experiences. Language policies and planning represent an indispensable tool for providing the necessary infrastructure for instructors and students exposed to teaching and learning in a language other than their own. Yet, despite the rise in student mobility and internationalization of higher education, literature is still scarce. This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of language policies and local instructors' attitudes toward those and internationalization efforts at Polish higher education institutions. Data are composed of language policies (different materials and artefacts) and open-ended questionnaire responses from local EMI instructors analyzed qualitatively. We argue for more multilingual policies, increased awareness about linguistic and cultural diversity in Polish higher education institutions, and more equitable academic and social practices for everyone. Linguistic and cultural diversity is indeed a social reality for which instructors and students need to be prepared to fully embrace its potential while receiving adequate support to also learn and appreciate local languages and traditions.

Özge Özoğul. *Learning from foreign researchers' multilingualism in Higher Education*

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This presentation focuses on the multilingualism of researchers in the internationalised context of universities and research centres in the bilingual Basque Autonomous Community. Taking a holistic perspective on multilingualism, it explores researchers' complex language use, multilingual practices, and sociolinguistic awareness through an adaptation of Cenoz and Gorter's 'Focus on Multilingualism' (2011, 2017, 2021) as the primary framework, as well as Kingsley's genres of communication (2010; 2013) and Deardorff's model on intercultural competence (2006). The data for this study were collected through an online questionnaire (phase 1) and semi-structured interviews (phase 2). The questionnaire, filled in by 66 researchers, concerned language competence, language use, and language attitudes about multilingualism. The interviews were carried out with 28 researchers to gain in-depth knowledge about language practices and experiences in the wider social context. The research findings will be presented under three headings: language use, multilingual practices, and sociolinguistic awareness facilitating cross-cultural and cross-border collaborations and partnerships. An analysis of researchers' language use patterns indicates that English is the language most frequently used alongside others. A number of languages are flexibly used in meetings, informal communication and more hybrid genres (emails and presentations). In the academic workplace, English dominates, but there is space for other languages. The situation in private life is more diverse and different languages are used, although English often has a presence. With regards to multilingual practices, although speakers may sometimes have reservations

for using more than one language at a time in a conversation, if allowed, it occurs naturally amongst multilinguals and results show that it facilitates communication. Transfers between languages in different directions are demonstrated in researchers' examples. The analysis of how multilingual speakers use their whole linguistic repertoire in informal interactions and how they create hybrid speech patterns, can inform language teaching and learning strategies and tools aimed at enhancing multilingualism. Finally, the presentation will demonstrate examples of how possessing a high level of sociolinguistic awareness, developed through mobility experiences, intercultural encounters, and language learning, enhances their ability to transform their work and build bridges between cultures.

Alina Oltean-Cîmpean. *Attitudes towards multilingual practices in the classroom at BBU: a case study*

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Romania is characterised by a rich linguistic diversity, noticeable both at the societal and individual levels. As a result, the MT+2 educational principle together with an increase in globalization and in the use of Romglish have lead to an increase in multilingual classrooms, both in secondary education and tertiary education. While multilingual education and multilingual classrooms can come with challenges, attitudes towards the use of multiple languages in the teaching and communicational processes can have an influence on classroom dynamic. Thus, the present study focuses on the attitudes that teaching staff from Babeş-Bolyai University (BBU) have towards the use of multilingualism in the classroom. For the case study, I have chosen the Faculty of Letters which represents a multilingual environment with Romanian, Hungarian and German as lines of study and with 19 languages that students can choose from to study. As a result, virtually all students have a certain degree of multilingualism as noticed in previous studies as well (see Oltean-Cîmpean 2021) which can often lead students to use translanguaging in the classroom (Garcia&Wei 2014). To this end, the present paper analyses the responses given through a questionnaire by members of the teaching staff at the Faculty in order to find out whether translanguaging is used in the teaching process, what their attitudes are towards such a use and whether multilingual practices in the classroom are seen as having a positive or negative influence on language skills.

Panel 2

Björn Kjellgren. *Navigating the sea of EU English: challenges and realities of promoting plurilingual competence in a European university alliance*

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This paper critically examines the challenges of promoting plurilingual competence in European universities against the backdrop of an English-dominated academic environment. Drawing on empirical data from the design and implementation of a policy on multilingualism and multiculturalism in a European technical university alliance, we explore both the persistent reliance on English as the lingua franca and the unrealised potential of linguistic plurality. While promoting multilingualism is a key objective of EU higher education policy, as well as of the Alliance focused on in this paper, our findings reveal significant barriers to moving beyond English-centred practices. We highlight the inherent difficulties faced by students and staff in engaging with multiple languages, including limited institutional support, resource inequalities and entrenched preferences for English. These challenges,

when juxtaposed with case studies from the Alliance, reveal a disconnect between policy aspirations and realities on the ground. One way to address this would be to move away from the notion of linguistic purity towards a more fluid and dynamic use of languages, encouraging translanguaging, intercomprehension and other plurilingual practices based on the principles of transculturalism. Embracing translanguaging in a communicative way can improve language proficiency and encourage more learners. This approach still recognises the need for well-developed languages for global communication (English), community integration (local languages) and broadening perspectives (additional languages), but promotes the value of fluid linguistic integration and functional multilingualism to enhance inclusivity and engagement. Recognising the importance of building on existing language assets within diverse university communities, even where these are predominantly English-speaking, we provide recommendations for fostering a multilingual environment focused on personal development, collaborative engagement and community enrichment, as well as strategic advice for institutions. By adopting these strategies, institutions can not only enhance academic and social integration, but also promote broader goals of cultural diversity, equity and inclusion. In doing so, they contribute to a more equitable and dynamic higher education landscape that values and utilises linguistic diversity as a vital resource, benefiting not only the academic community but society at large.

Christine Engelen, Adélie Michelland, Maxime Peeters. *Multilingualism in YUFE: how do students react & act?*

Christine Engelen, University of Antwerp - Linguapolis

Adélie Michelland, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3, student English major

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In recent years, English has been increasingly used as a lingua franca and the medium of instruction at universities in non-English-dominant countries. With English rapidly gaining ground in domains where another language was previously used, questions are raised about the Englishisation of higher education in Europe, and the concomitant position of local languages. In line with these discussions, the Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) Alliance of ten partner institutions from ten different European countries actively supports the learning and use of a variety of (local) languages, spanning from Finnish to Greek. While English serves as the primary language of instruction and communication at YUFE, the Alliance has implemented a language-in-education policy to promote linguistic and cultural diversity, encouraging the learning and use of multiple languages, including local ones. A study was conducted to explore the impact of YUFE's language policy. It draws on quantitative and qualitative data obtained through two online questionnaires administered to YUFE students prior and after their language courses and activities. Insights are provided into students' expectations and perceptions of their learning experiences, their preferred choice of language(s), learning formats and motivations for learning multiple languages. The findings will showcase how YUFE students engage with the multilingual opportunities provided by the Alliance, shedding light on how student choices contribute to our understanding of YUFE's role in fostering and promoting linguistic and cultural diversity.

Nathalie Kirchmeyer, Ida Pinho. *Multilingualism at a technical university – opportunities and challenges*

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Our presentation explores the multifaceted nature of multilingualism at a technical university, KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, focusing on both its opportunities and challenges. Multilingualism is at the heart of 21st-century skills as effective communication and collaboration are of great importance to navigate effectively in a rapidly changing and interconnected world. Languages act as bridges across diverse cultures, facilitating academic collaboration and professional networking. The multilingual environment not only enriches the academic experience but also prepares students for global career opportunities by equipping them with essential communication skills. It also enhances the development of pluri-/multiliteracies, thereby promoting effective and multimodal communication among students and staff. Nevertheless, incorporating these skills into engineering curricula is becoming increasingly challenging, the influence of the Anglosphere and curriculum concerns are some of the challenges we are facing. This results in a discrepancy between the aspiration for internationalization and the lack of preparation and appropriate skills. We will present some approaches implemented at KTH to facilitate sustainable multilingualism. KTH's language policy along with fostering a critical awareness of multilingualism, through e.g. COIL projects, are some of the keys to promote an inclusive environment where multiple languages coexist and thrive. It is important to support strategic initiatives to sustain and leverage the benefits of a multilingual setting in fostering an inclusive and dynamic academic community.

Panel 3

Frank van Splunder. *(Re)Considering multilingual competence in Higher Education. recent developments in the Dutch-language area*

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Multilingualism is a multidimensional concept. Yet, languages are commonly conceptualized as fixed and countable entities (e.g. the EU's 24 official languages), some of which are more prestigious and hence desirable than others. This commodified understanding of language is also reflected in European higher education, where English has emerged as the language of globalization at the expense of all other languages. This is particularly striking in the north of Europe, where 'national' and 'international' languages have lost ground as academic languages. This paper deals with the Dutch-language area in Europe (i.e., the Netherlands and Flanders), a multilingual region with a long tradition of foreign language learning. Even though the linguistic landscape has become even more diverse in the last decades, 'non-official' languages are marginalized in higher education, where the dominant languages are Dutch and English. The *Englishization* of higher education is most pronounced in the Netherlands, where the percentage of programmes taught in English is probably the highest in Europe. While Dutch is protected by law in Flanders, language practices reveal the omnipresence of English as well as a multilingual reality in higher education. The analysis is based on recent language policy documents and discursive practices in higher education. In the Netherlands, a new law aims to find a better balance between Dutch and English, while at the same time promoting multilingualism. Even though the current law in Flanders restricts the use of languages other than Dutch, universities advocate the use of English to remain competitive in a globalizing academic market. In academic discourse, multilingualism is commonly reduced to prestigious languages (e.g., French, German) endeavouring to counterbalance the overwhelming dominance of English. The paper argues in favour of a bottom-up approach, repositioning multilingualism as more than a mere antidote to English predominance within higher education. A better balance should be developed between the local language of education (Dutch), the academic lingua franca (English), and all other languages which are relevant in a particular context (including minority languages). Multilingual competence draws on different linguistic resources (e.g., *translanguaging*), and it should consider the needs of students, academic institutions, and society.

Ioana Mudure-Iacob. *Idioms teaching and acquisition through the filter of multilingualism and multimodality: negotiation meaning via code-switching and trans-languaging*

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The current study examines the relevance and impact of juxtaposing trans-languaging and multimodality in teaching and learning of idioms within the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The dynamic and diverse nature of ESP classrooms requires innovative approaches to facilitate the acquisition and practice of idiomatic expressions, whose role is crucial for fluency and cultural competence. Tapping into a wide variety of linguistic resources, multimodality can be embedded via digital tools in the teaching and practice of idioms, allowing learners to draw parallels and contrasts and to clarify and compare meanings between their native language (Romanian) and English. Trans-languaging practices used in idiomatic expression learning can enhance comprehension and retention of idioms by contextualizing them within familiar linguistic frameworks. The incorporation of multimodality in the teaching and learning process of idioms, such as visual aids (videos, memes, emoji-coded visuals) as well as the customisation of the practice sequences as interactive and gamified learning scenarios make idiom learning more accessible and memorable. Integrating trans-languaging and code-switching using Netspeak features can provide a more pragmatic and engaging learning framework for the acquisition and practice of specific vocabulary through idiomatic expressions. The current paper investigates the learning path of idioms acquisition and practice for 140 undergraduate students observed throughout ESP courses. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data is based on comparisons between quiz scores (at the beginning and end of the course), on students' reflection on their learning activity and on form feedback provided after engaging in a Digital Escape Room semester activity. Quantitative data analyses indicate students' preference over trans-languaging and multimodality integrated approaches in the teaching and practice of idiomatic expressions. The interplay between trans-languaging repertoire and multimodality reinforces the co-creation of knowledge and makes learning more dynamic and motivating. Moreover, qualitative data analyses reveal that the negotiation of meaning in the context of multimodal code-switching on the one hand and trans-languaging on the other hand can be enhanced in gamified learning activities and assessed in language mediation frameworks designed as part of the language classroom.

Teija Natri. *The framework of multilingual and intercultural communication competence: Pedagogical Tool for Learners*

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With the development of Higher Education, there is a need to renew our thinking on the intercultural and multilingual communication competence that is being taught in higher education (HE). Despite the increasing interest in the fields of intercultural and multilingual communication, clear learning outcomes to help students learn are often missing. Nevertheless, they are important for HE pedagogical purposes so that students can better reflect on and verbalize what they have learned as well as see how they can operate in diverse contexts and situations after they graduate from a HEI. In this presentation, I shall present a pedagogical framework and a tool to help students reflect on, analyze, and verbalize the multilingual and intercultural communication competence needed in a globalizing world. The framework draws from a variety of models and theories of intercultural and multilingual communication competence. It consists of a definition of multilingual and intercultural communication competence (MICC) and a framework with elements of competence including motivation and attitudes, skills, and knowledge. MICC needs to be understood as a situational and contextual process of life-long development. Learning outcomes can be used for self-assessment or peer feedback. The framework is

not a measuring tool nor is it to be used for summative assessment purposes. Rather, it is a tool and process of learning (formative assessment). Furthermore, the framework brings forward a fluid understanding of language and language use as multilingual resources and repertoires. I discuss also how multilingual practices used in intercultural content can enhance students' confidence when interacting within multilingual and intercultural groups and teams and how these practices can be used to address power inequalities, even in situations where a common language is used or in groups of students.

Oana Papuc. *Collecting language biographies and unearthing learner needs in the creation of ESP study packs and course content*

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The idea of piloting the creation of language biographies to be administered in the form of a qualitative questionnaire to undergraduate students enrolled in mandatory ESP/EMI courses, as an added tool in lecturers' routine use of resources in the preparation of classroom materials, was drawn from the author's case study on the use of multilingual practices and code-switching phenomena in the classroom (Papuc, 2019). Additionally, hands-on experience of working with undergraduate students enrolled in mandatory EMI/ESP classes points toward the need of identifying novel strategies for preventing and combating student disengagement, a recurring issue in a context in which it seems that young adults are increasingly struggling with mental health problems (Sapiens Lab, 2023). Lastly, the results of a workshop delivered to MA level students in Sociolinguistics, a degree offered by the University for Foreigners in Perugia, Italy, during a recently undertaken Erasmus teaching mobility, reflect the complexities of teaching multilingual students from all corners of the world in what is designed to be a primarily monolingual classroom. The workshop elicited students' response to and analysis of an autobiographical language passport. The provided answers in the items designed to identify advantages and disadvantages of monolingual/multilingual classroom talk, as well as language attitudes towards multilingualism, highlight the differences between expectations and reality. The students' appreciation or dislike of multilingualism in general, and of the various languages part of their linguistic repertoires in particular, illustrates how the emotional ties to one's linguistic repertoire (Dewaele, 2022) and subjective views in using specific languages influence management of work group interactions in the classroom, as well as perception of control and self-efficacy in approaching classroom content. Similar results were uncovered in the author's study on multilingual practices and their capability of helping students along in completing task requirements, achieving learner goals. Ultimately, piloting the use of language biographies to be administered to students in the EMI/ESP classroom, at the very start of their learning journey, could benefit in the creation of course content specifically adapted to different student needs, participants in possession of differently developed linguistic repertoires and distinct levels of competence.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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