Debating citizenship in a post-national world: multilingualism, border politics and migration

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Colloquium Abstract:
Recent global, regional and local developments imply huge challenges for the European Union and thus also for multilingual communication, both inside the institutions as well as among and with the EU member states. On the one hand, *hegemonic multilingualism* ensures that English (and French and German) remain the salient modes of communication. On the other hand, *migrant populations* (migrants, refugees and asylum seekers) and *new migrant languages* have to be integrated into the everyday lives of member states. On the other, there seems to be little sense of Europe’s complex *history*, for example, of the Habsburg Empire which already institutionalised a kind of hegemonic multilingualism (German being the hegemonic language) many centuries ago. Or of recent and on-going wars in the 20th century which caused and continue to cause thousands of people to flee their homes and to settle elsewhere, frequently without documents, citizenship or language skills.

As Bauböck et al. (2006) maintain many governments of EU member states tend to approach immigration as either a threat or an opportunity. At present there is no general consensus in Europe on the minimum level of proficiency in an acquired language (Extramania et al. 2014). In general, however, states orient themselves towards language assessment criteria which correspond to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Council of Europe 2001). The current situation in Europe is thus a patchwork of solutions to an array of perceived “citizenship” problems which show varying degrees of familiarity and awareness of language assessment practices. The panel will discuss the many contradictions which arise in a globalised world where nation states continue to emphasise homogeneity and the importance of the “mother tongue” of the majority. Papers cover current debates about migration and citizenship across Europe and beyond (and the gate-keeping functions of language tests, and so forth) as well as historical examples of mobility (and related loss of citizenship and language).
Participants:

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Ruth Wodak is Distinguished Professor of Discourse Studies at Lancaster University, UK, since 2004 while she has remained affiliated to the University of Vienna (as full professor of Applied Linguistics). Besides many other prizes, she was awarded the Wittgenstein Prize for Elite Researchers in 1996. 2008, she was awarded the Kerstin Hesselgren Chair of the Swedish Parliament and an Honorary Doctorate from University of Örebro in Sweden in 2010. In 2011, she was awarded the Grand Decoration in Silver for Services for the Austrian Republic. She is Past-President of the Societas Linguistica Europea, and member of the British Academy of Social Sciences and the Academia Europea.

I. Combining CDA’s Discourse-Historical Approach and New Literacy Studies to explore multilingualism and migration from Pakistan to the UK.

Antony Capstick
Lancaster University

This paper is based on the findings of a four-year study of a Mirpuri family’s migrations as seen through the lens of New Literacy Studies. By taking this approach I see literacy as a social practice, applied in different contexts to meet different purposes, in this case, the purposes of migration. This focus meant exploring many different activities involving reading and writing in the everyday lives of migrants and relating these to those individual’s migrations embedded in the histories of specific Pakistani communities, their literacies and their migration trajectories as well as the development of immigration policies of the UK.

Taking this ethnographic perspective implied taking part in many of these activities as well as observing them and asking about them in interviews. This generated a range of data from many different community locations in Pakistan and the UK.

This data was analysed by combining New Literacy Studies with Sociolinguistics and Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) specifically the Discourse-Historical Approach. What this meant was that the insider perspective so central to NLS was integrated with CDS’s critical perspective on society and the social problems related to literacy and migration as well as with detailed and systematic text-and genre analysis. The central concern was how Mirpuri migrants gained access to the dominant literacies of migration at a time when the UK government was increasingly moving towards a more textually mediated immigration regime. The study looked at what literacies were drawn on as prospective migrants and their families engaged with the bureaucracies of immigration when, for example, filling in visa application forms. However, the scope of this study went beyond an analysis of the texts of immigration and explored the literacy practices that link texts with institutions, social structures and discourses about migration.

The findings discussed in this paper showed that these literacy practices were part of the broader language practices that multilingual migrants from Mirpur drew on in their everyday lives, that English was only one of many resources in their repertoires, and that in order to understand how Mirpuris build ties with those around them, all of the languages that they use must be considered.
II. Political Translation: A Resource for Overcoming Misunderstanding and Inequity in Deliberative Publics

Nicole Doerr
University of Maryland

Based on ten years of fieldwork involving case studies in North America, Germany, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom, this paper presents a comparative study of deliberation under conditions of linguistic difference and cultural misunderstandings, including data on the largest face-to-face democracy experiment, the World Social Forum, and two of its regional chapters, the European Social Forum, and the United States Social Forum. Most democratic theorists have argued that linguistic and cultural differences foster inequality and impede democratic processes. However, in this empirical study, I present the collective practices of political translation, which helped multilingual and culturally diverse groups work together more democratically than homogeneous groups. Political translation, distinct from linguistic translation, is a set of disruptive practices developed by activists and grassroots community organizers in order to address inequities hindering democratic deliberation and to entreat powerful groups to work together more inclusively with disempowered groups.

I began with an empirical puzzle. Why, in the 40 forums I studied, were citizens from different countries, speaking different languages and feeling strangers to each other, able to work together more democratically than citizens in monolingual, culturally homogeneous civic groups? To resolve this empirical puzzle, I did the first systematic comparative study of deliberation under conditions of linguistic and cultural difference. Set in the context of the largest face-to-face democracy experiment, the World Social Forum (WSF), the book I am working on, Political Translation, traces how WSF members—unionists, left politicians, and global justice activists—created the European Social Forum (ESF) and the United States Social Forum (USSF) to involve thousands of citizens, immigrants, and multiple language speakers in deliberation about social justice and international politics. I define deliberation as a communicative process of grassroots democracy composed of pluralist experiences and practices in social movements and civic forums (Mansbridge 1982; Young 1996; Polletta 2002; Baiocchi 2005; della Porta 2005).

The central counterintuitive finding in the book emerged from research I conducted in Europe at nine European Social Forum meetings, which were held to organize transnational annual summits in Europe to discuss current critical social and political issues. I compared the deliberation in multinational, multilingual European Social Forum preparatory meetings with deliberation in parallel national, monolingual preparatory assembly meetings in Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. I had expected that linguistic differences would constrain democratic decision making at the European preparatory assemblies. I found, however, that these multinational and multilingual meetings were better than the national meetings at including disadvantaged groups in their decision making.
III. Othering, Imagined Boundary-Making and Categorisation in Discursive Accounts of Journalistic Practice

Michal Krzyżanowski
Örebro University

My GURT 2015 presentation will highlight results of EU funded cross-national research on Media for Diversity and Migrant Integration (MEDIVA, 2011-12) in which I directed one of the national research teams (see Bennett et. al. 2013; or Gemi et. al. 2013, for the key findings). The overall aim of the project was to conduct research on the capacity of the European media to reflect the diversity, social cohesion and integration potential of European societies at the time of economic crisis. Drawing on my research on values, templates and imaginaries in discursive accounts of journalistic practice (Krzyżanowski 2014) that follows some of the recent CDS and related studies on discourses of journalism (Richardson 2008, van Hout and Jacobs 2008, Catenaccio et al. 2011) or on journalistic practice (Couldry 2004, Machin and Niblock 2006, Niblock 2007), I will present a critical analysis of journalists’ discourse on such practices as news making, news-selection and formation of media discourse. While a huge amount of research in Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) over the years has focused on various forms of ethnic, cultural, religious or national categorisation in European media discourse, little research to date has focussed on how, in their accounts of professional practice, journalists themselves deploy various forms of ‘othering’. Therefore, I will focus in my analysis on various forms of categorisation – e.g. good ‘emigrants’ vs. bad ‘immigrants’ – that are used by journalists, often in relation to further socio-political categories like nationality or citizenship, or to different spatio-temporal scales. I will argue that the social imaginaries and boundary making practices of journalists have a far-reaching stigmatising effect and eventually penetrate into contemporary media discourses. However, as I will be trying to show, rather than stemming from, as is too often assumed, various extrajournalistic ‘realities’ as sources of reporting, those categorisations often originate in journalists own mis/perceptions of various social (incl. ethnic/national) groups as ‘others’.

IV. Orders of (in)visibility: Checkpoints and sexual citizenship in Israel/Palestine

Tommaso M. Milani & Erez Levon

*University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg & Queen Mary University of London*

Over the last few years, research on language, mobility and citizenship has gained considerable momentum within (critical) discourse analysis. Particular attention has been paid to those contexts in which language tests have been introduced as gate-keeping mechanisms for the naturalisation of migrants. The groundbreaking aspect of this scholarly work lies in their unravelling of the interplay between the actors, the argumentation strategies, and the ideologies at work in the process of shaping language policies related to citizenship. What has remained rather unexplored in this scholarship, however, is the role played by sexuality in relation to mobility and citizenship, making some bodies more or less (in)visible (see however Murray 2014).

Against this backdrop, the aim of this paper is to explore the orders of sexual (in)visibility in the context of Israel/Palestine. For this purpose, we will analyse the film *Out in the Dark* (Mayer 2012) and the documentary *Invisible Men* (Mozer 2012), both of which represent the lives of queer Palestinians at the crossroads between the Palestine and Israel. Interestingly, these films were received very differently by audiences across the world. Acclaimed by some as ‘making a difference’ for queer Palestinian visibility, they were criticized by others as tools in the interest of Israel’s “homonationalism” (Puar 2010), namely the political strategy through which the Israeli state has co-opted the legal enfranchisement of lesbians and gays as a way of presenting itself as more progressive, civilized and ultimately morally superior than Palestine.

In this paper, we want to complexify this Manichean, and rather simplistic reading by unveiling the complex orders of (in)visibility that are discursively produced therein. Through an innovative theoretical framework that brings together Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis with Interactional Sociolinguistics, we will unpack the contradictory discursive strategies through which these films make visible certain movements, bodies, spaces and relationships whilst erasing others.
V. Touring Amsterdam: Jews and the Tolerant City

Gabriella Modan
The Ohio State University

Jews have been part of the social fabric of the city of Amsterdam for over 4 centuries, starting with refugees fleeing the Inquisition in Portugal. Despite this long tenure and the granting of full citizenship rights in 1796, Jews’ full inclusion in the body politic has been tenuous. In contemporary public culture, this tenuosity can be seen by a discursive ambivalence that casts Jews as simultaneously insiders and outsiders. Such ambiguous positioning gets used strategically by various stakeholders in telling the story of the city of Amsterdam, often as a means of constructing Amsterdam as a multicultural and tolerant city.

This paper examines discourse about Jews and things Jewish in texts from tours of Jewish Amsterdam. I analyze how a simultaneous insider-outsider identity is created through spatial, temporal, and language-oriented placement and displacement. Temporally, these sites focus on Jewish life in the pre-World-War-II period, paying little attention to contemporary Jewish life. A second popular time period is the late 16th century, when Jews fleeing the inquisition found a safe haven in Amsterdam. Spatially, the texts focus on life in the old Jewish Quarter in the east of the city, rather than other areas where a high proportion of Jews lived and continues to live.

Tourism materials often connect the history of Jews in the city with the history of the city itself, and language – specifically Yiddish -- is one of the mechanisms that makes that connection. Where in earlier eras use of Yiddish marked one as Jewish, over time Yiddish words have come to be part of the local dialect, marking one as an Amsterdammer, and tourism materials use Yiddish words when discussing local identity. While in some ways such a semiotic shift casts Jewish life as part and parcel of Amsterdam culture, the discussions of these Yiddish words often specifically highlight Jewish life in the prewar period, simultaneously re-ethnicizing the words and displacing them from the present time. Taken together, these strategies work to portray Jewish life not as a vibrant part of the contemporary city, but rather as something rooted in the past.
VI. Critical Discourse Analysis of Contemporary Debates on Birthright Citizenship

Otto Santa Ana

*University of California, Los Angeles*

I propose to offer a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of two sets of contemporary discourse in favor of changing the provision in the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution that grants citizenship to every child born on US soil.¹ I hypothesize that maintaining cultural and political hegemony is at the base of these discourses, rather economic or State concerns.

From its founding, US citizenship was based on the English Common Law concept of *jus soli*, ‘law of the soil’, or birthright citizenship. However, the US Supreme Court infamously ruled in *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1856) that former slaves born on US soil were not entitled to US citizenship upon emancipation: they were not “peoples of the United States” but rather were an “inferior class of beings.” Consequently, to try to secure full citizenship for liberated African Americans, a post-Civil War Congress in 1868 authorized the 14th Amendment, which among other things nulified *Dred Scott* and constitutionalized *jus soli*.²

Twelve million mostly Latino unauthorized immigrants reside in the US today. Since the US Congress has been unable to repair its broken immigration regime, nativist rage has called for, and enacted much controversial legislation. I propose to compare the public discourse and legal discourse of one often-verbalized appeal: to deny citizenship to the children of unauthorized immigrants by changing the 14th Amendment.

I will study these discourse streams with a CDA based on conceptual metaphor theory. Metaphors that are articulated in a discourse stream on a given topic tend to be organized in semantically coherent constellations. CDA can offer, in effect, a window onto the worldview of the people articulating the discourse. For the public discourse, I will draw on the public record of legislators who want to rewrite the birthright citizenship clause. For the legal discourse, I will draw on the writings of contemporary legal scholars such as Lino Graglia³ and Matthew Ing.⁴

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¹ Whether the child’s parents are citizens or non-citizens, excepting the children of foreign diplomats and hostile enemy forces.


Since the end of last century a shift can be observed in many European countries towards stricter conditions for integration and citizenship of immigrants. One of the most salient conditions is language (proficiency). In many countries people have to prove they have a certain level of proficiency in the ‘official language’ (or one of the official languages) of the so-called ‘host country’. More and more language tests are being used for this purpose.

In a first part of this paper the findings of the fifth European survey on ‘language policies for the integration of adult migrants’ (COE, 2013) will be critically discussed both diachronically and synchronically.

The official discourses underlying these policies are to strengthen and facilitate participation in civil society and increase access to the labour market and/or further education. However, can a positive social impact of these integration and citizenship policies be observed? This question will be discussed on the basis of some recent impact studies that have been conducted.
VIII. “Whose story?” – Narratives of persecution, flight and survival told by the children of Austrian Holocaust survivors

Ruth Wodak & Markus Rheindorf

_Lancaster University & University of Vienna_

In our presentation we report some first results of an interdisciplinary (psychological, historical, discourse-analytical) research project on narratives of persecution, flight and survival told by the children (and grandchildren) of Austrian victims of Nazi persecution, all of them left-wing political dissidents and some of them also Jewish. These narratives differ strikingly from those told by Holocaust survivors themselves, not so much in terms of the events re-told, but in terms of the telling, specifically their narrative framing. In keeping with the theme of the panel, we focus on the narratives as they relate to flight and the loss of citizenship and homes due to the annexation of Austria to the Nazi-German ‘Third Reich’, i.e. what it meant to arrive in a new (host) country and how belonging and attachments as well as acceptance were negotiated. We moreover investigate what it meant – from the children’s perspective – to later return to and grow up in the country that had excluded their parents. In their narratives, the interviewees try to come to terms with the experiences of their parents and bridge the obvious cognitive dissonance: of living in Austria and holding a citizenship which was denied to their parents at a tragic, even traumatic point of their lives.

Previous research into Holocaust and migration narratives has shown the crucial importance of narrative ownership and the immediacy of personal experience as guarantor of authenticity (de Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012, Baynham & de Fina 2005, Schiffrin 2001, 2002, 2003), elaborating among other things on the linguistic realizations and performance of these in the narratives themselves – while also highlighting that the telling of traumatic events related to the Holocaust creates notable tensions between experience and language, stressing the limits of speaking the unspeakable (Ball 2003). This manifests itself as uncertainties and repairs – looking for words – in the narratives that may be reduced with consecutive re-tellings of the stories, gradually leading to so-called “re-told” or “familiar stories” (e.g. de Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012, Schiffrin 2003, Norrick 1997, 2000), i.e. stories that are often linked intertextually on the level of discourse and individually re-told word-by-word (Schiffrin 2002).

In contrast, our data show a marked and characteristic “disownership” – not simply a lack of ownership or absence of the afore-mentioned emphasis on ownership, but its opposite. This disownership is performed in narrative framings that take the form of disclaimers – of not having been there, of not having experienced, even of not knowing anything – what we would call the “narrative veil” or “Erzählschleier” to borrow a literary term (de Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012). In contrast, the narratives of persecution, flight and survival themselves – though frequently interrupted or suspended to reinforce this veil – generally constitute re-told or familiar stories, hence becoming a kind of generic archetypical narrative, metonymically condensing the entirety of the horrible past, however not situated in specific time or space (Baynham 2005).

Through the narratives themselves we explore the ways descendants cope with the traumatic past of their parents, the impact of belonging to a specific group of refugees, notions of belonging/marginalization and loss of home and citizenship as well as the gendered performance of agency, caring and remembering.
References


