Call for papers

Family languages: attitudes, uses, policies and experiences[1]

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Université Paris Descartes and INALCO, 5-7 December 2019

International conference organised by the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle EA 2288 DILTEC, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3, in collaboration with the EDA, Université Paris Descartes, the research departments of INALCO, the Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3 PRAXILING, and Langscape

https://languesfamille.sciencesconf.org

Main theme

The family is the institution at the heart of which the process of language learning and socialisation initially develops in every society, era and context, regardless of possible variants in its definition. How language is used particularly develops through contact and interaction with other types of social organisations, as larger structures than the family, such as schools, municipalities and States, come into play, although informal education outside these structures also provides a source of learning (see *Éducation Permanente* No. 2014-2: *Éducation non formelle et apprentissages tout au long de la vie*).

Though the family is regarded as the first and essential locus of language transmission, it is important to highlight the variations between language forms communicated in the home and those at school, even when the language is "the same".

Linguistic variations influence the social world, but the opposite is also true. For example, in the case of divorce, adoption or family blending, family structures mutate, possibly altering linguistic repertoires in their wake. In this way, repertoires can become associated with life experiences, perhaps those related to migration, from which emanate a type of legacy, even divided loyalty, concealing family secrets, types of taboo, self-censorship, inhibition or the avoidance of the original language in the home. Each of these attitudes can lead to maintaining, assimilating, abandoning or losing a language, as those concerned appropriate other languages unrelated to their initial repertoire, and possibly unwelcome within the

family unit. However, in certain family contexts, communication only takes place in one language so as not to exclude a monolingual parent.

Lastly, life-changing decisions driven by the globalised labour market sometimes result in migration experiences, which can give rise to bi- or multilingual situations where individuals can assimilate two, three, or more languages. At the same time, recessive, subtractive and passive bilingualism may emerge, sometimes caused by institutional pressures or language policies that influence a family's linguistic choice, as in the case of regional languages or those originating from migration. Furthermore, the pressures of social representation confer different "values" on languages depending on their social status. As a consequence, different multilingual language combinations can be perceived as having a greater or lesser "value" in the host society, just as bi- or multilingualism can be overlooked as potentially conducive to a cognitive handicap resulting in a form of semilingualism.

For these reasons, the very notion of "linguistic transmission", at the very core of our conference theme, should be held up for analysis. Most often perceived as binary and vertical (a language transmitted, or not, by parents), horizontal forms of linguistic transmission do exist, sometimes outside the family: for example, language learning through peers, non-profit organisations, or other family members. These horizontal forms therefore constitute an alternative route or a means of bypassing transmission in its traditional form.

For our international conference, we welcome proposals which explore issues surrounding the links between family, languages, and other more socially complex institutions. The following five topics are guidelines; we encourage participants to use a cross-cutting approach. Proposals for more than one topic are also welcome.

Topics
1. Linguistic transmission and cultural transmission
The processes of linguistic and cultural development are interlinked, as demonstrated by anthropological research on language socialisation in very diverse contexts (Ochs, Duranti and Schieffelin 2012). Though the socialisation of an individual is an ongoing process only ending in death, some customs encountered during the initial learning process are so deeply integrated that they become automatic reflexes, sometimes difficult to shed; codes of etiquette provide a good example. As we know, etiquette can vary even among same-language social groups, but one individual speaker can also demonstrate such variations when their linguistic repertoire encompasses several codes. These automatic reflexes can also be observed at other levels like communication management, stance, and negotiation of meaning, when a subtle and most often subconscious blend of linguistic and cultural skills come into play. The role of the family environment, which in most cases is the same as that of primary socialisation, can therefore be explored further, focusing on situations involving discontinuity, which may apply to migrant children, or those who speak a different language at school from the one(s) spoken at home, as seen in many contexts across the world. Further subjects of interest are those of avoidance, or other strategies put into effect in order to resolve certain tensions between linguistic uses assimilated in the family and those imposed or valued by school, peers, media, or other areas in society.

2. Acquisition and multilingualism

The mode of communication adopted by families in mono-, bi- or multilingual contexts where different languages come into contact can have both positive and negative effects on the process of acquiring a language. We will be able to examine which multilingual family practices possibly contribute to developing bi- or multilingualism in children as well as the strategies or approaches on which they are based, i.e. how languages are distributed and the order in which they are acquired ("One language first, then another", Grosjean, 2015). We will also concentrate on *(i)* different forms of bilingual speech, (code-switching, code-changing or borrowing; see Lüdi and Py, 2003) *(ii)* the phenomenon of (un)equal linguistic distribution among siblings or generations and, *(iii)* heritage language erosion when a dominant language is spoken outside the home. In the case of heritage languages, how can we characterise the learning process? Is it similar to acquiring an L1 or L2? How can grammar be assimilated with only minimal input? Formal linguistic research (Benmamoun, Montrul & Polinsky, 2010) has identified different factors which shape heritage grammar, particularly in instances of transferral from the dominant language. Nevertheless, other dimensions must be taken into account, such as the frequency of exposure to the heritage language, the continuity of its input, whether it is actively used, or taught. (Montrul 2016).

3. Sociolinguistic perspectives

An individual's linguistic repertoire is reflected in the genealogy of their expressions, where history and philology overlap. This is of interest, as the expressions are often loaded with family symbolism − "mother" tongue, or "paternal", "family", "original", "heritage" languages. This terminology has led some authors to prefer alternative expressions, such as "primary socialisation", "affiliation", "reference", etc. Family languages are nevertheless open to analysis from both micro and macro sociolinguistic perspectives, which may or may not focus on migration. Can we measure the impact of family language contact on a national scale? What is its qualitative impact on the family? What are the trends, and which languages do they apply to?

Language is often considered a major component of identity. Studies on the representation of language sometimes highlight paradoxes, illustrated by "My language is Arabic, but I don't speak it" (Billiez, 1985). These studies provide insight into the construction of feelings of affiliation or allegiance to a family heritage.

What are the findings from research into how languages are managed within mixed-language couples in the context of migration, and in the terms of conscious or subconscious "family language policies" (International Symposium, Angers, 27 May 2016)? Blommaert (2019) laid emphasis on the "raison de famille" in order to understand the dynamics of language interaction and ideologies which are crucial, much as same to "raison d'état" where ideologies of the nations are enforced by the authorities at macro-level. Haque (2019: 226) pleaded for the recognition of "family language policy" as research practice, particularly in France, to "understand and explore the crux of the problem of language practices and ideologies in the family".

We can also explore the issues of divided loyalty, linguistic insecurity, and selective mutism in children from migrant families. In these areas, ethno-psychiatric research provides helpful insight. Lastly, contributions about strains of ideology rooted in interaction with dominant languages or relating to forms of exclusion also fall within the scope of this topic.

4. Children's languages: from home to school and school to home
A child's social world revolves around school where they develop. Their linguistic skills come up against a standard language characterised by the influence of the predominant written culture and academic formalism. This gives rise to confrontation between what some authors term as basilects, mesolects and acrolects, but others tend to query (Drescher, 2014), particularly regarding linguistic practices observed in sub-Saharan African contexts (Feussi 2008). Interpersonal relationships may or may not strengthen linguistic and social affinities through common sociolects among peers or with adults. A child's adherence to and acculturation of the linguistic norms valued by school will determine the degree to which they feel constrained by the institution.

In France, multilingualism has been more or less accommodated by governmental policies on education. Local idioms were initially banned, then some heritage language classes were introduced after school hours, particularly via a teaching program for heritage languages and cultures. Now, the development of multilingualism is positively encouraged, yet although the range of modern languages taught in school has increased, it remains limited.

Attention has focused on multilingualism with the arrival of non-native French-speaking pupils from other countries. However, although teaching methods mainly adhere to a pluralistic approach, those used for heritage languages tend to be prescriptive and ill-adapted to the criteria of educational institutions. Thus heritage languages are discredited, whereas the language spoken at school becomes the language of the future, entering the home where it is spoken alongside or in place of the heritage language. How do educational policies, teaching materials and methods, and family language policies interrelate? How can institutions in France and elsewhere better cater for heritage languages?

5. Literary and artistic corpus: an interdisciplinary approach
Writers are astute observers of the practices, attitudes and mediation which interfere with the relationship between languages and identity building in the family and its interactions with society. Through a joint fictional exploration of language and family, certain literary works open a window onto dimensions of subjectivity that are difficult to observe. These may involve the relationship with the mother tongue, (associated with mothering, and nutritional and containment functions), or the adoption of a second language as the written language, (generating feelings of abandonment and loss on the one hand, and emancipation on the other). Multilingual authors have written many works blending fiction with autobiography, which explore the psychological effects of switching between languages (Esteban), non-transmission of a native language by a parent (Sebbar), multilingual practices in diglossic contexts (Chamoiseau), and migration (Huston), as well as highlighting the mix, contamination and characteristic hybridization of family interlanguage (Begag, Salvayre). By examining these different facets of multilingualism, the very process of literary, or broadly speaking, artistic production can claim to distance and estrange the written language from the standard language, under the influence of the heritage languages, regardless of whether they are real-life transcriptions or to some extent fanciful reconstructions. This topic covers sociolinguistic contextualisation, biographical perspectives and textual analysis. It brings together researchers from diverse fields who share an understanding of the corpus of literature and the arts as a valuable source for research which, via its texts, sheds light on issues of languages in the family.

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Submission

We welcome proposals in the fields of language and culture teaching, language acquisition, language policies, sociolinguistics, anthropology, educational sciences, arts and literature.

Topics
1. Linguistic transmission and cultural transmission
2. Acquisition and multilingualism
3. Sociolinguistic perspectives
4. Children's languages: from home to school and school to home
5. Literary and artistic corpus: an interdisciplinary approach

Papers will last 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion.
Conference languages are French, English or Spanish.
Proposals must not exceed 3000 characters (including spaces) and should state:

• Full title of paper
• Full name(s) of author(s)
• Institutional affiliation
• 3 to 5 key words and choice of topic(s) proposed by the conference
• Main bibliographic references (5 max)

The conference will include two hour-and-a-half slots for symposia. Each symposium should be composed of at least two teams from different laboratories or universities, each consisting of a maximum of 5 people. Symposia should present results from current or recently completed research and must include data as well as applications to applied linguistics and associated disciplines (for example, intervention, praxis, program design, recommendations for language policy). We recommend that about a third of the symposium be practical, perhaps involving interaction with the audience. All proposals for papers and symposia must be submitted online.

To submit, click on "Submit" on the conference website: https://languesfamille.sciencesconf.org/submission/submit

Key dates
• Close of call for papers: 15th of May 2019
• Notification of results: 1st of July 2019
• Registration: 1th of October - 15th of November 2019
• Conference: 5th-7th of December 2019

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As part of this conference, a presentation event of the Erasmus+ Enrope (https://enrope.eu/) project and a Langscape doctoral seminar (https://blogs.hu-berlin.de/langscape/) will take place. Registration lists and communication channels specific to these two events will be communicated later.