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Metapragmatics, Language Ideologies, and Positioning Practices

University of Vienna · July 16 – 20, 2018

■ **Program & Abstracts**

◾ Schedule

Monday, July 16, 2018

13:00–14:00   Arrival and Registration
14:00–17:00   Introduction | J. Spitzmüller & M. Flubacher
                       Short student presentations (with posters)

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

9:00–12:00   Lecture & Discussion 1 | M. Silverstein
                       The dialectics of indexical semiosis:
                       Scaling up and out from the 'actual' to the 'virtual'
12:00–14:00   Lunch
14:00–17:00   Workshop 1: Theory | M. Silverstein
                       Cultural Value in Discourse:
                       How It (Indexically) Signifies, (Interdiscursively) Circulates,
                       and (Radially) Emanates in Society
17:30–19:00   Individual consultations | with lecturers

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

9:00–12:00   Lecture & Discussion 2 | A. Jaffe
                       Making the body tell the code:
                       Scriptural and orthographic economies, stance and layered
                       indexicalities
12:00–14:00   Lunch
14:00–19:00   Field trip: Indexical Vienna | B. Busch & J. Sonnleitner
                       A journey to heterotopia:
                       Indexing times and spaces at the Wiener Zentralfriedhof
19:00–21:00   Dine & wine at Viennese Heurigen restaurant

Thursday, July 19, 2018

9:00–12:00	Workshop 2: Method/ology | A. Jaffe
	Linguistic Anthropological methods and analysis:
	Rigor, stance, indexicality and scale
12:00–14:00	Lunch
14:00–17:00	Lecture & Discussion 3 | J. S.-Y. Park
	Grounding figures of personhood:
	Time, space, affect
17:30–19:00	Individual consultations | with lecturers

Friday, July 20, 2018

9:00–12:00	Workshop 3: Data Session | J. S.-Y. Park
	Spatiotemporal and subjective dimensions of
	metapragmatic data
12:00–14:00	Lunch
14:00–16:00	Synthesis & Closing | J. Spitzmüller & M. Flubacher

■ Abstracts
(in chronological order)

Michael Silverstein | Lecture (July 17, 2018)

The dialectics of indexical semiosis
Scaling up and out from the 'actual' to the 'virtual'

Conventional (socio-historically specific) indexicality – a sign-vehicle pointing to some co-occurrent(s) as its 'context' – is semiotically effective only when regimented by its meta-indexical (or 'metapragmatic') interpretant, a conceptual scheme presumed upon by the participants in communication that determines the categories of possibility for a relevant "here-and-now" of indexically signaled co-presence, just as, conversely, such an interpretant must be an emergent consequence of the indexical sign's pointing to its object. (Even in the specifically denotational function of language viewed as the utterance of syntactic sentences and sentence-fragments, successful reference and modalized predication, as communicative partials, respectively depend upon presupposing a so-called universe of reference and an organization of so-called possible worlds, among other factors.) In the more general case of non-denotational indexicality, forms that indicate everything from the perduring demographic characteristics of participants in discursive interaction to their shifting role incumbencies, their voicings of identity and identification, and their momentary relational attitudes and affects (sometimes loosely termed 'stances'), the culture- and thus group-specific metapragmatics, the 'ethno-metapragmatics', is central to the way such indexicals entail the mutual (il)legibility of interlocutors and the (in)coherence of interactional projects in which they are engaged, the 'interactional text', as we term it, of what is happening. This inherent metapragmatic functionality of models of indexical signs and their contexts on which interlocutors depend, is, in general, itself influenced by various genres of metapragmatic discourse about social life, ones that virtually "circulate" among networks of people who participate in certain sites of sociality; such "circulation" is a virtual reality that comes into being via chains of interdiscursivity and even intertextuality, allowing us to imagine a plane of the 'ideological' with its own order of virtual semiotic dialectic that, notwithstanding, we experience in actual interactional context by its effects on the ever-changing what and how of indexicality.

Reading

Silverstein, Michael. 2014. Denotation and the pragmatics of language. In
N. Enfield, P. Kockelman, & J. Sidnell (eds), Cambridge Handbook of
Linguistic Anthropology, 128–157. Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.
Gal, Susan. 2016. Sociolinguistic differentiation. In N. Coupland (ed.),
Sociolinguistics: Theoretical debates, 113–135. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press.

Michael Silverstein | Workshop (July 17, 2018)

Cultural value in discourse
How it (indexically) signifies, (interdiscursively) circulates, and (radially) emanates in society

Through the detailed analysis of examples drawn from the work of various researchers, we will consider how any particular discursive interaction (or its semiotic equivalent, such as communication via plastic, graphic, sonic, pixelated text-artifacts) is at once [1] a structure of conventional indexical – frequently indexical-iconic – signs emergent in the dialectical process we term entextualization/ contextualization; [2] a node in an interdiscursive chain of genred configurations of such signs, which seem thus to "circulate" in society (sometimes in relatively fixed and genred form); and [3] an event that can be sited/located in a complex web of social-institutional structures, where the semiotic forces on it intersect from many such chains of circulation, each structuring force an emanation from some central, functionally "ritual" site that in effect establishes value in society for those who deploy its semiotic systems.

Reading

Silverstein, Michael. 2013. Discourse and the no-thing-ness of culture.
Signs and Society 1(2). 327–366.
Silverstein, Michael. 2014. The voice of Jacob: Entextualization,
contextualization, and identity. ELH 81(2). 483–520.
Harkness, Nicholas. 2013. Softer soju in South Korea. Anthropological
Theory 13(1–2). 12–30.

Alexandra Jaffe | Lecture (July 18, 2018)

Making the body tell the code
Scriptural and orthographic economies, stance
and layered indexicalities

This talk explores the scriptural and orthographic economies in a Corsican bilingual school, looking at the production and evaluation of "le bon usage" (good form/usage) in both handwriting and spelling. The case of handwriting trains the analytical lens on both the bodily dispositions to writing that children are socialized into and the importance of the material artifacts (notebooks) produced. Following deCerteau, the analysis looks at the way handwriting norms and practices of copying (reentextualization) from the board "make the body tell the code": specifically, how indexical connections between linguistic/paralinguistic practices and social/ideological formations are forged through socialization to handwriting and how those connections, once established, become reinscribed and naturalized in/on the body of the writer. The analysis also addresses the implications of these processes for the way that the minority language (Corsican) is positioned vis-à-vis French, as well as for the stances towards French and Corsican offered to students.
The second focus—orthography—examines the way that a plural, or "polynomic" orthography for Corsican positions novice writers (both child and adult learners of Corsican) as agents and "owners" of legitimate language in an context in which sociolinguistic identity, authority and authenticity are unstable and contested. Both scriptural and orthographic practices are analyzed as forms of mediation of ideological tensions related to legitimate speakerhood that both enable and constrain individual agency and self-positioning.

Readings
See workshop.

Brigitta Busch & Julia Sonnleitner | Field trip (July 18, 2018)

A journey to heterotopia
Indexing times and spaces at the Wiener Zentralfriedhof

"The death must surely be a Viennese", says a popular song alluding to the alleged Viennese obsession of celebrating death and dying – a topos that developed over time in different arts and in popular genres. Our journey will take us to the Wiener Zentralfriedhof (central cemetery) which is one of the largest burial grounds in Europe. With its more than 3 million buried and more than 2 million square meters, it is as large as a district and exceeds the number of people currently living in Vienna. The Zentralfriedhof is mentioned in every tourist guide not only because of the numerous funerary monuments dedicated to famous people but also because of the various religious denominations represented. This necropolis at the periphery of the city corresponds with what Foucault sketched out as heterotopia: sites juxtaposing several spaces and layers of historical times in a single real place. This way, what seems to be incompatible among the living is realised as utopia among the dead. Our walk will take us to multimodal representations displaying different forms of remembrance, rituals, scripts, and languages emblematic of the capital of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as well as of the more recent heterogeneity of a globalized city.

Reading
Sonnleitner, Julia. 2018. Chronotopes of Apartheid: Transmitted Memory as Positioning Practice among the Born-Free Generation of South Africa. Wiener Linguistische Gazette 83. 28–47.

Alexandra Jaffe | Workshop (July 19, 2018)

Linguistic Anthropological methods and analysis
Rigor, stance, indexicality and scale

This workshop will draw on some concrete data examples to engage a discussion around data collection and analysis. Topics to be considered include:

   a) what constitutes rigor in ethnographic methods as well as other forms of qualitative data collection?
   b) Selection/sampling of data for analysis
   c) Integrating different types of data
   d) Evidentiary criteria/frames in data analysis
      a. Contextualization
         i. As a process "in" the data and as an analytical imperative
            1. multi-scalar
            2. Historical/temporal (situating analysis of specific events against a historical/temporal backdrop of interactions, relationships, textual trajectories etc).
            3. Institutional/material
      b. Connections
         i. little "d"/big "D" discourses
         ii. levels of indexicality
         iii. ideology in linguistic and metalinguistic practice
         iv. stance objects at multiple levels and scales

Participants are invited to bring brief texts/data samples or questions from their own research for discussion.

Reading (lecture & workshop):

Carr, Summerson. 2010. Enactments of expertise. Annual Review of Anthropology 39. 17–32.

Jaffe, Alexandra. 2016a. Stance, indeterminacy and ideological process: structuration in the indexical field. In N. Coupland (ed.), Sociolinguistics: Theoretical debates, 86–112. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaffe, Alexandra. 2016b. What kinds of diversity are super? Hidden diversities and mobilities on a Mediterranean island. Language & Communication 51. 5–16.

McIntosh, Janet. Mobile phones and Mipoho's prophecy: The powers and dangers of flying language. American Ethnologist 37(2). 337–353.

Joseph S.Y. Park | Lecture (July 19, 2018)

Grounding figures of personhood
Time, space, affect

Figures of personhood (alternatively, characterological figures, discursive figures, models of personhood) occupy a key role in contemporary metapragmatic analysis (Agha 2005, 2007, 2011). Metapragmatic talk is frequently mediated by such figures, allowing speakers to link the use of linguistic forms with specific speaker images, thereby refining and reframeing the indexical meaning of such forms in the process of enregisterment, and imbuing language with the power to position subjects in social context. But how do we operationalize the concept to apply it to discourse data and use it to generate insights about how language ideological practices shape the social and political conditions of everyday life? In this lecture, I suggest time, space, and affect as valuable heuristics that can guide our application of the notion of figures of personhood to metapragmatic data. While figures of personhood are constructed, negotiated, and circulated through fundamental semiotic processes, including indexicality, voice, and stance, they are typically organized along dimensions of time, space, and affect — that is, figures of personhood are frequently formulated in relation to specific time-spaces and in terms of specific affective positioning, acquiring their specificity from such spatio-temporal and subjective grounding. For this reason, paying attention to how discursive construction of speaker images engages with ideological representations of time, space, and affect can serve as a useful basis for recognizing how discourse participants orient to figures of personhood. In addition, such analysis provides an opportunity for analysts to more firmly locate metapragmatic discourse in specific material and subjective context — a point which has particular relevance for a metapragmatic analysis that seeks to understand how language ideologies serve as a foundation for constructing sociocultural and political economic relations. This talk will elaborate on these points by deriving methodological lessons from theorists such as Bakhtin and Goffman as well as recent work in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics.

Joseph S.Y. Park | Workshop (July 20, 2018)

Data session
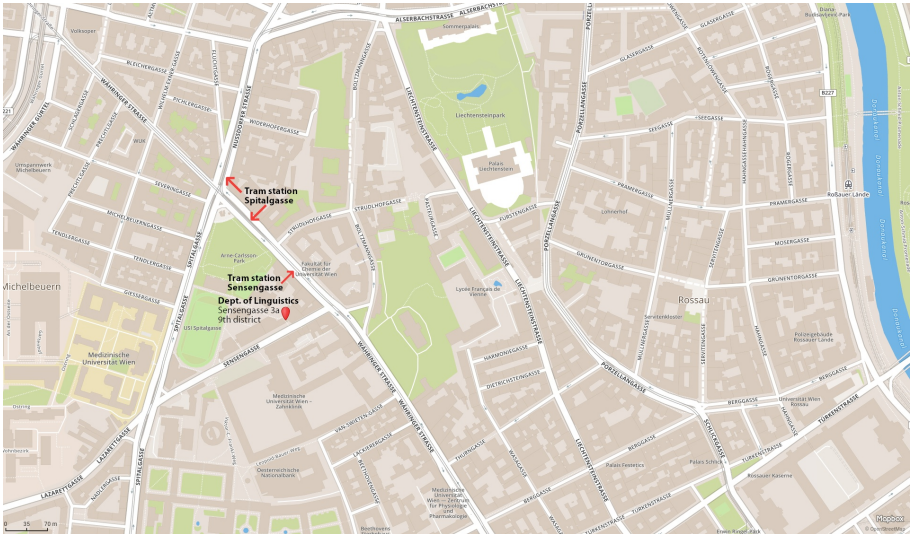## Spatiotemporal and subjective dimensions of metapragmatic data

Building upon the content of the previous lecture, participants of this workshop will practice tracing dimensions of time, space, and affect in metapragmatic data and discuss what kind of 'best practices' might be suggested for analysis. The workshop will be organized as a participant-driven data session. Participants will prepare and bring some type of data (in ethnographic, textual, and/or interactional form) involving meta-pragmatic discourse to be shared with the group, and they will jointly work with each other's data to consider how the spatiotemporal and subjective grounding of metapragmatic discourse can be utilized in the analysis of speakers' positioning practices. The participants will then reflect on the problems and issues that have come up through the course of their analysis, collaboratively developing strategies for dealing with such problems and issues in their future work.

Reading (lecture & workshop)
Park, Joseph Sung-Yul. 2017. Transnationalism as interdiscursivity: Korean managers of multinational corporations talking about mobility. Language in Society 46(1). 23–38.
Reyes, Angela. 2017. Inventing postcolonial elites: Race, language, mix, excess. Journal of Linguistic Anthropology 27(2). 210–231.

■ Venues

Lectures and workshops take place at the building where the *Department of Linguistics* is located, Sensengasse 3a, 1090 Vienna, first floor.
Tram station is either *Sensengasse* or *Spitalgasse*.

Vienna Zentralfriedhof can be reached by tram line 71, station *Zentralfriedhof, 2. Tor*. Note that it takes about 50 mins. from the city center (station *Schottentor*) to get there.

Vienna, 2018