

Language, Labour and (Im)mobilities

4th Workshop of the Language and Work Group

Nowadays, “mobility” has become a keyword with differing values and interpretations. Sociolinguistics shares this keyword with not only other academic disciplines but also organisations and actors that structure or react to geographical mobility, such as commercial and corporate recruiters, bureaucrats, NGOs, international organisations and ICT. A special focus lies in work-related mobility and its effects on the labour market integration of migrants and refugees, the accommodation of highly-qualified “expats”, as well as on all workers involved in past, present and future mobilities. This workshop explores the nexus between language and work from the perspective of multiple, interconnected actors in the complex infrastructure that mediates and regulates migration policy, including linguistic requirements, and discourses about different types of (potentially) mobile workers. This *migration infrastructure* (Xian and Lindquist, 2014) encompasses commercial services that facilitate migration (e.g. brokers, language schools), agencies and migration policies that regulate migration at state level (e.g. border control), humanitarian infrastructure concerned with public advocacy and policy interventions (e.g. NGOs) and migrant networks. Together with actors involved in this infrastructure, our goal is to unpack how various forms of voluntary and involuntary geographical mobility are categorised and valued for/in different types of work. We aim to analyse the construction of *key figures* (Salazar, 2018) with idealised work experiences and linguistic repertoires (e.g. the refugee intern, the international academic, the mobile humanitarian) in a wide range of socio-political and historical contexts. Further, we seek to problematise the widespread positive considerations of geographical mobility as symbolic, and even economic, “moving up” and positive change for oneself (e.g. as in economic migration) or for others (e.g. in the case of NGO delegations) by means of fine-grained analyses of the socio-political conditions for legal and linguistic pre-requisites for work.

Open day: Friday 5th April · 9.00-17.45

University of Lausanne, Anthropole, room 2106 (metro 2: UNIL-Chamberonne)

9.00-9.30 Welcome by Maria Rosa Garrido Sardà & Jennifer Thorburn

Thematic session: Language, labour and (im)mobilities

9.30-10.15 Alfonso del Percio, University College London: *Language, Mobility and the Multiplication of Labour*

10.15-10.30 Break

10.30-11.15 Maiju Strömmer, University of Jyväskylä: *Challenging language management: Case of mobile mining labour in a peripheral mine in the Finnish Arctic*

11.15-12.00 Kamilla Kraft, University of Copenhagen: *The Role of Language in Multilingual Construction Sites*

12.00-13.30 Lunch

13.30-14.15 Mingdan Wu, University College London: *Standardizing Labour for Mobility: Language and the Making of the Service Worker*

14.15-15.00 Eleanor Yue Gong, University College London: *Struggling for mobility: English and the making of international business workers in China*

15.00-15.15 Break

Round table with stakeholders

15.15-16.30 Round table with representatives of ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) & EVAM (Etablissement Vaudois d'Accueil des Migrants)

16.30-16.45 Break

16.45-17.45 Discussion and debate moderated by Martina Zimmermann, PH Luzern

Please confirm attendance to Maria Rosa Garrido Sardà before 22nd March 2019

Local organisers: Maria Rosa Garrido Sardà (mariarosa.garridosarda@unil.ch) and Jennifer Thorburn (jennifer.thorburn@unil.ch), English Department, Université de Lausanne