

# European Multilingualism and Multiculturalism Today

Friday September 29  
Gryphon Gallery, 1888 building, University of Melbourne

Sponsored by the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross-cultural Communication (RUMACCC), and the Contemporary European Research centre (CERC), University of Melbourne

## Workshop Program

9.30 *Coffee and tea*

9.50 *Formal opening (Alison Lewis)*

10.00 Guus Extra, Language, migration and citizenship in Europe: a case Study on Testing Regimes in the Netherlands

11.00 Andrzej Gwizdalski, Failed multiculturalism in the European Union

11.30–11.45 *break*

11.45–12.15 Andrew McGregor, Dealing with the outside within: Cultural representation in Tony Gatlif's *Gadjo Dilo*

12.15–12.45 Heather Benbow, "Ethnic drag" in Doris Dörrie's film *Happy Birthday, Türke* (1991)

12.45–1.30 *Lunch*

1.30–2.00 Ashleigh Rees, French and Australian perspectives on multiculturalism: Islamic headscarves in the 21st century

2.00–2.30 John Hajek, European Multilingualism Today – the figures speak for themselves

2.30–3.00 Oksana King, How many languages do Ukrainians speak? On the question of multilingualism in Ukraine

3.00–3.15 *Coffee and tea*

3.15–4.15 Claudia Riehl, German-Romance language contact and language conflict in Italy, France and Belgium

4.15–4.25 *formal closing (Alison Lewis)*

## **Abstracts**

### **Language, migration and citizenship in Europe: a case Study on Testing Regimes in the Netherlands.**

*Guus Extra, Tilburg University*

The first part of this talk deals with the concepts of language, nation, and citizenship in a European context of migration and minorisation, and with the European discourse on foreigners, integration, and citizenship. Derived from this context, the second part goes into the Dutch discourse on newcomers and Dutch testing regimes for admission (*toelating*), integration (*inburgering*), and citizenship (*naturalisatie*). The development of each of these testing regimes will be addressed. Given the fact that the citizenship test is the last step of the trajectory that has to be faced by newcomers, a content analysis will be presented of the closely related *Nationale Inburgeringstest* and an empirical analysis of what Dutch citizens know about what Dutch newcomers should know.

### **Failed multiculturalism in the European Union**

*Andrzej Gwizdalski, Centre for Australian Studies*

Viewed from outside its borders, Europe appears as a multicultural unit; a small subcontinent with dozens of nations, cultures, different languages and dialects. However, the closer we look at it, the more illusory the idea of multicultural Europe becomes. In my view, three clear factors distract the process of multicultural integration in the European context: (1) nationalistic tendencies in many European countries; (2) failed integration of immigrants from outside of the EU, mainly from Islamic/Arabic cultures; (3) a seemingly lacking common European identity. In this workshop I wish to address the above mentioned issues from a critical perspective, and discuss the reasons for their occurrence, and future developments in this context.

### **Dealing with the outside within: Cultural representation in Tony Gatlif's *Gadjo Dilo***

*Andrew McGregor, French, Italian and Spanish Studies*

This paper will focus on the representation of Roma culture in Tony Gatlif's 1998 film *Gadjo Dilo (The Crazy Stranger)*. Gatlif's film is of particular interest as it is one of very few feature-length productions that offer *any* representation of the Roma, let alone an arguably sympathetic one. Both the film and the focus proposed here are academically and cinematographically underrepresented, and yet they raise questions that are crucial to our understanding of the multicultural identities of European nation states, and their representation in film. This paper will explore the extent to which Gatlif's film sustains and challenges the preconceived notions that are perpetuated by European governments as they continue to justify policies of forced integration, assimilation and exclusion by defining the Roma as a 'nomadic' people in a perpetual state of cultural as well as geographical displacement. Critical responses to the film will also be examined, as well as

Gatlif's claim to have authored a film that reveals a 'truthful' representation of a largely misunderstood and often resented cultural minority.

### **"Ethnic drag" in Doris Dörrie's film *Happy Birthday, Türke* (1991)**

*Heather Benbow, German, Russian and Swedish Studies*

An enduring theme in post-war German cinema is "the growing awareness among film-makers of the many foreigners living in the Federal Republic" (Hake 174). This is a topic on which successful director Doris Dörrie's films provide some significant comment and insight, "while avoiding all too simplistic solutions to the central question of identity" (Hake 174). Dörrie's films depict characters who must "perform" an ethnic identity in order to negotiate the rigid stereotypes of self and other, German and "foreigner" that pervade 1990s Germany. In a 1991 genre film *Happy Birthday, Türke*, the Turkish-German private detective Kemal Kayankaya imitates a poorly educated guest worker as well as a Turkish government official. Portrayed by a German actor of Polish background, Kayankaya speaks no Turkish and is consequently an outsider in both the German and Turkish communities. His ironic take on ethnic identity will be investigated here using Katrin Sieg's recent theorisation of "ethnic drag".

### **French and Australian perspectives on multiculturalism: Islamic headscarves in the 21st century**

*Ashleigh Rees, French, Italian and Spanish Studies*

The paper will use the example of the Islamic headscarf to examine the different attitudes to multiculturalism in France and Australia. While Australia understands and articulates questions about the Islamic headscarf in terms of multiculturalism, France has framed its headscarf debates in terms of republicanism and republican citizenship. The paper will examine the impact of these divergent discourses on public understandings of Muslim populations in France and Australia, and in particular, perceptions of the Islamic headscarf.

### **European Multilingualism Today – the figures speak for themselves.**

*John Hajek, French, Italian and Spanish Studies*

Official European Union policy actively promotes the spread of multilingualism amongst its citizens. We report on the latest surveys (*Eurobarometer* 2001 and 2006) which provide information on language knowledge before and after recent expansion of the EU. Particular focus is given to English, French, German, Italian and Spanish – and we can compare their relative distributions both in terms of L1, L2+ speakers but also geographical distribution. We also discuss attitudes by survey respondents to the value of multilingualism and their willingness to achieve it.

### **How many languages do Ukrainians speak? On the question of multilingualism in Ukraine**

*Oksana King, German, Russian and Swedish Studies*

If English and German were some company's products we could say that they have found a very large and reliable market in the Ukraine. In the last 15 years, ever since the Ukraine has become an independent state, foreign languages have acquired new meaning in Ukrainian society. The newly elected Yushchenko government is pursuing a line of politics aimed at integration into the European community – the situation which provides new incentives for foreign language learning. In the sphere of education, the Recommendations of the Council of Europe regarding foreign languages are currently being adopted and are triggering a great deal of debate amongst scholars, language teachers and politicians alike.

In the meanwhile, Ukrainian language has been strengthening its position in education, media and commerce, etc. at a great pace. The number of schools with Ukrainian as medium of instruction soared up to 70% in 2001 compared with just 16 % in 1987. Russian language, which for a long time enjoyed the status of *lingua franca* under the Soviet regime, has rather abruptly shifted into the category of 'foreign languages'. This is despite the fact that Russian in Ukraine is spoken by more people than Ukrainian.

### **German-Romance language contact and language conflict in Italy, France and Belgium**

*Claudia Riehl, University of Cologne*

The paper deals with three different German-speaking minority groups in Romance-speaking countries: The German-speaking community in South Tyrol (Italy), Alsace (France) and East Belgium. Each of them has a different history and faces different conditions concerning its minority status. The Tyrolians and part of the East Belgian community enjoy specific minority rights such as schooling in the mother-tongue, public representation etc., whereas the Alsatians and the other part of the Belgian community are conceded only some 'facilitations'.

The paper discusses the impact of these different conditions on the intensity of language contact (language contact phenomena at different levels) on the one hand and the sociolinguistic background on the other, focussing on language conflict and linguistic identity.