

EGCL Programme

Monday 27th March 2017 - Room 1N1.4.1

13.30-14.00	Conference Registration
14.00-14.30	An element geometry account of depression in Bantu and Khoisan Xiaoxi Liu
14.30-15.00	Luo tonal and intonation structure Zilpah Saul Ombijah
15.00-15.15	Coffee Break
15.15-15.45	How humane is the humanitarian response to refugee children in the UK: a corpus analysis of the UK press coverage for promises and actions Hamida Jahamah
15.45-16.15	The impact of practice with massed versus spaced distribution on second language vocabulary retention Ahmad Al Fotais
16.15-16.45	Cultural Contexts: Retarder in English Attrition among Chinese English learners Yan ZHANG

Abstracts for EGCL 2017

Xiaoxi Liu

An element geometry account of depression in Bantu and Khoisan

The tonal depression refers to certain consonants in tone languages that exhibit extreme tone lowering effect on the immediately following vowel. Observations on depression in Bantu and Khoisan show that (i) a nasality and voicing asymmetry exists in depression and (ii) the triggers for depression vary from voicing, breathiness, voiceless non-aspiration to voiceless aspiration.

In this study, I will first examine the phonetic perspective on depression, which has been the mainstream direction in the literature. I will then propose a revised element geometry by extending the geometry structures in Clements (1985), Kula (2002) and RCVP (van der Hulst 2005) and Botma (2004), aiming to explain the above asymmetry through hierarchy in representations and to unify the seemingly unrelated triggers of depression under a single element |L|.

Zilpah Saul Ombijah

Luo tonal and intonation structure

The aim of this presentation is twofold. First, is to look at the general tonal structure of Luo (a western Nilotic language spoken in Kenya and Tanzania) including reviewing its tone types and tonal processes. The second aim is to look at how tone interacts with intonation in the

language.

It should be noted that, tone is a linguistic pitch variation measured by fundamental frequency (F0). In tonal languages, like Luo, it contrasts lexical items as well as signaling morpho-syntactic distinctions especially in verb paradigms (Andersen, 1993). On the other hand, intonation is also a pitch variation analyzed as either fall or rise but in the course of an utterance. This similar variation in pitch makes it more interesting, as both phenomena are observed through F0.

A number of studies on the Luo tone system, specifically Kenyan Luo, have been undertaken, including that of Omondi (1982), Okombo (1982) and Tucker (1994). However, Omondi (1982) and Tucker (1994) talk about the syntactic structure and the general grammar of the language respectively, giving less importance to the interaction between tone and intonation. Okombo (1982) just mentions the types and location of tones in the course of analyzing the Luo nominal morphology. Generally, less has been said concerning the interaction between tone and intonation and thus this particular study intends to fill that gap.

Hamida Jahamah

How humane is the humanitarian response to refugee children in the UK: a corpus analysis of the UK press coverage for promises and actions

There has been minor emphasis on refugee children representation in press, though they are the most vulnerable in the war and displacement equation. Moreover, refugee children debate is considered timely, since UK has just refused to comply with the Dublin agreement for resettling 3000 Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC), and they minimized the number to less than 300 .

The findings of this research should feed into the current trend toward influencing the positive role media has on public attitudes which ultimately affect refugees.

This research aims at examining the representation, current shaping of the Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAS) children in UK press, and its impact on public attitudes in two of the leading UK quality newspapers; the Guardian and Telegraph between June-December 2015. The research will examine; frequent topics, issues, and collocations used related to RAS children, linguistic basis for constructing and defining RAS children, and the attitudes toward RAS children as extracted by the press.

Qualitative and quantitative methods will be applied in order to produce an objective picture of media attitudes. The qualitative method is based on critical discourse analysis focusing on the theoretical concepts mentioned in the news papers' articles and stories on RAS in general and RAS children in particular, such as "terrorism" and/or "illegal". The quantitative method is applied through the corpus linguistic focusing on the number/frequency of corpus throughout the 6 months period.

Ahmad Al Fotais

The impact of practice with massed versus spaced distribution on second language vocabulary retention

Psychologists (gg. Sobel et al., 2011; Carpenter et al., 2012; Goossens et al., 2012) have found that information is retained better when instruction/learning sessions are repeated over a period of time with lengthy intervals between each learning session, as opposed to learning information in a single lengthy learning session. This phenomenon is called the spacing effect, and is one of the most

robust and consistent findings in memory research. However, despite its apparent relevance to the educational context, the vast majority of research on the spacing effect is confined to laboratory experiments. The current study, examined whether the spacing effect occurs in real classroom settings in relation to immediate and delayed vocabulary retention. Vocabulary tests testing four degrees of strength of lexical knowledge were used to measure vocabulary retention. Forty-nine Saudi Arabic-speaking first year English major undergraduates were taught the meaning of 30 unknown words in a spaced condition and 30 other unknown words in a massed condition. The results of both the immediate post-test and three-weeks delayed post-test revealed that acquisition and retention of words on all four degrees of strength of lexical knowledge was better in the spaced condition than in the massed condition. These results suggest that the spacing effect applies to vocabulary learning in real-world classrooms.

Yan Zhang

Cultural Contexts: Retarder in English Attrition among Chinese English learners.

The reality that large portion of Chinese learners suffers obvious attrition in English language proficiency shortly after their language input cease has been a long-term perplexity and also generated great depression to most English teachers in China. Traditional English textbooks were compiled through using some essays, articles or excerpts of different genres in English to introduce cultural quintessence through the second language acquisition. However, the cultural elements are just remembered as exotic anecdotes while language proficiency is deteriorating at an amazing speed.

To solve such an embarrassment and respond to the policy of spreading Chinese culture to the world, a newly-edited supplementary textbook focusing on Chinese history and contemporary cultural contexts has been introduced and applied in some universities in China. Thus, the newly edited version of textbook arouses the reflection on the question that whether cultural merits of Chinese taught in English can help stimulate the motivation and perfect the attitude of Chinese student in learning English, and therefore help avoid the retention of English competence upon after their formal English instruction in class ceases. In other words, whether the cultural context could be a retardant and how the language retention and attrition could be effectively reduced through cultural contexts are on the stage of the research.