

International Linguistic Association

Monthly Lecture Series

Saturday, May 4, 2024. 11 AM - 12 PM (EST)

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Whole-network approach in study-abroad second language acquisition: How students' peer interactions affect their progress

Abstract

Target-language gains often belong among the primary goals of international student mobility. However, despite “folk beliefs” that mere presence in an L2-speaking country will inevitably promote language acquisition virtually through osmosis, not all learners benefit equally from study-abroad sojourns, and considerable variation has been evinced in their linguistic attainment.

One line of enquiry that has attempted to explain the varied picture has investigated students' social networks as a factor conditioning their interactions and—subsequently—progress. This talk will demonstrate how computational social network analysis that looks beyond an egocentric approach—where information on the students' contacts is only gained from the focal participants—and instead takes a bird's-eye whole network view can reveal non-trivial results on the influence of peer interactions among language learners on their attainment, basing on the speaker's projects ranging from research on international student exchanges to intensive language programs offered by U.S. universities to courses for Ukrainian refugees. We will also discuss changes in participants' social interactions, L2 use and progress over time, as well as the importance of always taking into account the local ecology.

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Michał B. Paradowski is a professor and teacher trainer at the Institute of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw and a research and language teaching consultant. His interests include second language acquisition, foreign language teaching, bi- and multilingualism, translanguaging, psycholinguistics, embodied cognition, English as a lingua franca, Study Abroad, social network analysis, corpus linguistics, and emergency remote instruction. He gave 240 invited lectures, seminars and workshops across 40 countries. Michał was PI in projects <https://peerlang.ils.uw.edu.pl>, <https://schoolclosure.ils.uw.edu.pl> and <https://L2grit.ils.uw.edu.pl>, and is currently co-PI (with Sarah Mercer, Alastair Henry, and Christine Muir) in an international grant proposal on language teachers' well-being.

Date & Time: May 4, 2024 at 11:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

ZOOM LINK: <https://bmcc-cuny.zoom.us/j/83719027422>

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