

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 18, 2018 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

POSTER SESSION 2

Commons West, Easel 4

1:00 PM to 2:30 PM

A Linguistic Inquiry into the Status of Patagonian Welsh

Josh Benjamin (Josh) Warnick, Senior, Linguistics, Physics: Applied Physics

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Alicia Wassink, Linguistics

Patagonian Welsh is a dialect of the Welsh language spoken in the southern Argentinian province of Chubut, brought to Argentina in the mid-1800s by settlers seeking to establish an enclave of Welsh culture abroad in the face of British persecution. It is spoken today by a small community, and very little scholarship exists on the dialect. This project's purpose is to take a first step towards cataloguing the phonology, grammar, and sociolinguistic status (the relationship between speakers of the language/dialect and social phenomena such as race, class, age, or gender) of Patagonian Welsh, and to answer the question "How, or to what degree, has Patagonian Welsh diverged from Standard Welsh?" Sociolinguistic studies are often conducted using a "man on the inside" from the community whose language is being studied, in order to avoid the researcher's presence altering social dynamics in data elicitation that may distort results. To that end, we have recruited volunteers from the Welsh-speaking community of Argentina to aid in interviewing fellow community members and record data. We have also prepared elicitation materials, including translation exercises, a collection of Welsh texts to be read and compared with Standard Welsh readings, and interviews in order to expose preferred grammatical formations, variation of the language between casual and formal diction, and phonology. Based on existing scholarship and observation, we anticipate that the language will show influence from Spanish phonology and vocabulary, and that it will display marked age-grading, with divergence from Standard Welsh varying with age. An observance of such behaviors may suggest that Spanish and Patagonian Welsh may be undergoing language mixing, which would mark the first observance of such a phenomenon in the case of a Celtic language. As such, this project will constitute a significant expansion of historic and linguistic knowledge concerning the Welsh diaspora and language.

SESSION 2N

MCNAIR SESSION - STORYTELLING, DIGITAL VISUALIZATION, AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Session Moderator: Gabriel Gallardo, Geography

MGH 295

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Investigating the Distribution of Abstract Pronominal Anaphora in English

Dominique (Dom) O'Donnell, Senior, Applied Linguistics, Computer Science, Portland State University

McNair Scholar

Mentor: Susan Conrad, Portland State University

Coreference resolution, the process of identifying expressions that refer to the same entity in discourse, is an important task in natural language processing. Abstract anaphora are distinct from other types of referring expressions because their antecedents are abstract entities, which can surface in non-nominal form. Abstract pronominal anaphora pose an interesting challenge for anaphora resolution due to the variation in the form and semantics of possible antecedents, which are associated with a small set of pronouns. The goals of this study are to investigate the distribution of abstract pronominal anaphora by analyzing language in use and to examine the role of abstract pronominal anaphora in resolution systems. I will investigate the distribution of the referential pronouns 'it', 'this' and 'that' by annotating and analyzing a corpus of five English registers: newspaper text, academic writing, fiction, spontaneous dialog and planned speech. I will construct these five subcorpora to include a sufficient amount of text for analysis. I will analyze the role of referring pronouns, anaphoric distance, and the structure and semantic category of abstract antecedents. I will compare the distribution of these features within each register and the corpus as a whole.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 37

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Understanding French Phonology through the Language Game Verlan

Sierra Skye Anderson, Senior, Romance Linguistics

Mentor: Laura McGarrity, Linguistics

A language game is created when a group of speakers systematically alters the phonological forms of words in their native language in order to disguise the meaning of what they are saying from unwanted listeners. An example of this in French is a language game called Verlan, which is spoken primarily in the low-income suburbs of Paris by adolescents and young adults. This language game obscures the forms of the original French words, typically by reversing the order of the syllables (or through several other phonological methods) in order to create a coded language. It has been suggested by linguistics researchers, such as Natalie Lefkowitz, that language games can be used to “reveal the phonological structure of the languages in which they are played,” as well as to provide corpus-external evidence for underlying phonological rules and constraints that govern the original language. For this research project, I sought to gain deeper insight into the hidden structures that underlie French phonology through native speakers’ use of Verlan. By following similar experimental methods used to study other language games, I proposed an experiment that would examine French speakers’ phonological representations of problematic consonant clusters by analyzing their Verlan productions of nonsense words. Different productions could reveal differences in speakers’ internal grammars that are not readily seen in the native language phonology. This method of analyzing language games could give linguists another tool to use when investigating phonological rules of a language that couldn’t previously be tested on naturally occurring words.

buildings. Furthermore, the project looks at buildings designed by those mindful of these elements and how these buildings create a welcoming environment for the deaf. DeafSpace also embodies the spirit of DeafGain: how though the deaf experience focuses on deaf people, their experiences can benefit all types of people. By learning more about DeafSpace, other architects can be mindful of these elements and contribute to a universal design that can benefit a variety of people.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 36

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

DeafSpace: Components, Applications and the Benefits for All

Tierra Tristina Gogue Garcia, Recent Graduate, Psychology

Mentor: Lance Forshay, Linguistics

DeafSpace is a style of architecture created in 2005 based on Deaf architecture in 1800’s. Using the Deaf experience in architecture, DeafSpace uniquely enhances the elements of hearing architecture to create a positive experience for deaf people. The project discussed the questions of how Deaf Culture influences architecture design, why each of the 5 components of DeafSpace are essential to have for a deaf-friendly building, and how the DeafSpace components can be beneficial to hearing architecture. Methods of approaching this topic included reading several articles, review papers, and interviewing architects about their techniques to create these