



# EARS/EUCOR

December 2013 – Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

## EUCOR Programme

### 7 December (Saturday) HS 1199, KG I

9:30 Conference Office open; Tee & Coffee

10:00 Welcome (Wolfgang Hochbruck & Freiburg Crew)

### 10:30 Panel 4 Ph.D. Conference (contd.)

10:30-11:00 Mirka HONKANEN (Freiburg; dir. C. Mair): “the little i kno i learnt on niaraland”

Multilingual resources and authentication in the diasporic Nigerian CMC Mass migration and the constantly increasing popularity of the Internet have cut the ties between particular geographical locations, communities, and linguistic varieties taken for granted by early dialectological and variationist sociolinguistic studies. This research project will investigate the computer-mediated communication of one such displaced group – Nigerians living in the United States – joining together World Englishes research with the emerging fields of the sociolinguistics of CMC (Androutsopoulos 2006) and the sociolinguistics of globalization (Blommaert 2010). The starting point for the research is authenticity, more specifically the use of linguistic resources in processes of authentication (Bucholtz 2003). The linguistic repertoire of a typical educated Nigerian in Nigeria includes at least one indigenous African language, the emerging Nigerian standard variety of English, and varying degrees of competence in Nigerian Pidgin. However, diasporic Nigerians, particularly those of second or third generation, necessarily have access to more truncated versions of these resource sets, while enjoying easier access to standard and non-standard North American English. Further restrictions on their online communication are imposed by the written medium and the language ideologies of the community. Relying on a large (ca. 20 million words) corpus collected from a Nigerian online discussion forum as data, my PhD project will examine the written usage and appropriation of multilingual resources in the negotiation of race, ethnicity, identity and authenticity by the members of the Nigerian diaspora in the early 21st century USA.

11:00-11:30 Laura TERRASSA (Freiburg, dir. C. Mair): Structural Simplification in Asian Varieties of English

This project deals with structural simplification in Asian varieties of English, more precisely in Singapore English, Hong Kong English, Malaysian English and Philippine English. Increased morphological transparency, regularization of irregularities and loss of redundant information are, among others, mentioned in the literature as factors contributing to simplification (cf. Trudgill 2010; compare also Dahl 2004, Kusters 2003). A comparison of the degree of

structural simplification in the four aforementioned varieties of English is particularly interesting not only because of the role of English in the respective language communities (cf. Schneider 2007), but also from the point of view of (second) language acquisition and learner problems accompanying it. In a first step, the project will examine structural simplification in verb phrases and noun phrases in those four varieties of English by means of corpus analyses. For that purpose, data from three subcorpora of the International Corpus of English (ICE), namely ICE Singapore, ICE Hong Kong and ICE Philippines, as well as the recently released Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE) will be taken into account. Further features worth investigating will be identified subsequently. Since structural simplification does not necessarily make the grammatical system simpler (for example, due to a loss of distinctions), perception experiments will be used at a later stage to investigate how structural simplification is actually perceived by the recipients of a message.

11:30-12:00 Andy MEHRING (PH Freiburg, dir. M. Hutz) Mid-Atlantic English – an Emerging Variety in the EFL Context? A Sociolinguistic Study of the Role of British and American English in EFL Teaching.

Around 70% of all native speakers of English speak the American version of English, thus making it the most widespread English variety on the globe. Therefore, both British native speakers' and non-native speakers' English are significantly and unavoidably affected by this massive consumption of American English. Since American English is the variety to which teachers and students are most frequently exposed, a mix of the two reference varieties is utilised, commonly called Mid-Atlantic English. The main purpose of this sociolinguistic research project is to investigate whether it can be claimed that native speakers of British English, and especially non-native students of English and non-native English teachers, use a mixture of the two main varieties. In addition, informants' prevailing attitudes towards the two main varieties will be scrutinized. It is important to find out, inter alia, whether there is a growing popularity among non-native school and university students of English language and literature in English departments of preferring American English to British English and consequently using a mix of both. Finally, this study will also seek to portray a more complete and elaborated picture - compared to previous research - of non-native English teachers' awareness of and attitudes to the main varieties, also with a view to elucidating if their attitudes are reflected in some way or other in the instruction hall by requiring their students to be consistent (stick to one variety), for instance. The results of my extensive data collection from different sources will be exhaustively discussed, analysed, evaluated, compared and presented in tables and other formats, with the goal of closing an existing research gap according to me.

12:00-12:30 Wibke SCHNIEDERMANN (Freiburg, dir. S. Lemke) Unhoused Icons: Images of Homelessness in American Culture

Representations of homelessness in American literature have been divided into two modes, one that objectifies the homeless by following a naturalist tradition which foregrounds personal failure and abject otherness, and a form of romanticization that depicts homeless characters as free-spirited vagabonds (Allen, *Homelessness in American Literature*). The latter representational fashion often corresponds to dominant mindscapes of the United States, particularly of the West. Beat-generation poets and folk musicians reinvented the figure of the hobo as a libertarian character whose itinerant lifestyle is a performative protest against corporate America's consumer culture. The celebrated individualism of this neo-romantic image of vagrancy also connects it to the icon of the American West, the cowboy (Hemmer, *Cowboys Crashing*). Despite the harsh reality of a migrant laborer, as addressed e.g. in Annie Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain*, the cowboy still maintains a position in the American

imagination as the epitome of personal freedom and self-determination that also affects representations of homelessness in American culture. Other iconic images that inform depictions of the homeless are the mad-genius stereotype, as in Steve Lopez's *The Soloist* or George Dawes Green's *The Caveman's Valentine* and, most explicitly in a 2007 episode of *South Park*, the zombie, which has become a figurehead of anti-capitalist protest (Giroux, *Zombie Politics*). By means of recent ethnographic and sociological studies I want to uncover the discursive and ideological currents that pervade cultural images of the homeless and that also call into question the established dual categories of the deserving vs. the undeserving poor.

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch Break (Lunch at the Mensa of the University, opp. KG I)

**14:00 – 17:00 Parallel Master Sessions in HS. 1139, 1142, 1144**

(program to be announced)