

New speakers and language policy: New geographies of language in minority language sociolinguistics

The Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL, The Netherlands) and the Heritage Linguistics Lab (HerLing) cordially invite you for the TENTH lecture of the LUCL Virtual Research Seminar Series 2 on Language Policy and Practices in the Global North and South. The talk featuring **Prof. Bernadette O'Rourke, University of Glasgow**, United Kingdom will take place on 08 December via Zoom from 13-14:30 hours CET. The details are as follows:

Abstract: In this talk, I examine ways in which certain geospatial and territorial perspectives of minority language revitalisation have shaped language policy and planning initiatives. Minority language sociolinguistics has been concerned with language rights, the local spaces in which these languages are used and how such spaces relate to the dominant national language space. The principle of territoriality has shaped geographies of language and understandings of language, place and space. While minority language sociolinguistics has produced an enormous amount of valuable research on the geographical distribution of linguistic minorities, there is still a tendency to trivialise the relationship between language and space. This is based on underlying assumptions in minority language sociolinguistics which have not always taken sufficient account of speakers' multilingualism, their mobility and the idea that space is produced relationally through the speakers themselves. In the talk I will look at how the new speaker framework and the concept of new speakerness, might be used to sharpen our thinking on new geographies language in minority language sociolinguistics. I will draw on examples from a range of minority language contexts to explore ways of re-thinking contemporary geographies of language and key concepts such as language, territory, space, place and community, which continue to be at centre of theoretical debates in the field.

Bio: Bernadette O'Rourke is Professor in Sociolinguistics at the University of Glasgow. Her research sits within the broad area of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language and focuses on the political and social meanings of language and their influence on society. She is particularly interested in the dynamics of multilingual societies, language revitalization in minoritized languages, ethnography of resistance, language ideologies and language activism. She has examined these dynamics across a range of fieldwork sites and language contexts including Galician (northern Spain), Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Faroese. Since 2011, she has been examining the experiences of "new speakers" of minority languages (so-called "non-native" speakers who acquire a language outside of the home). In more recent years, she has extended this focus beyond minority language contexts, exploring theories around the sociolinguistics of the "speaker" across a range of multilingual strands in the context of migration and transnational mobilities. She was Chair of a pan-European COST Action on New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe between 2013 and 2017.