

International Research Workshop CLARe 2015
Language Use in Later Life
7, 8, 9 December 2015
University of Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve), Belgium

Organization Committee : Dr. C. T. Bolly (Universität zu Köln & University of Louvain), Prof. P. Feyereisen (University of Louvain), Prof. A. Gerstenberg (Freie Universität Berlin), Dr. L. Meurant (University of Namur), Prof. A. C. Simon (University of Louvain)

With the participation of leading experts in the field, the workshop aims to focus on the theoretical implications of empirical work as conducted by CLARe's projects (Corpora for Language and Aging Research), in order to develop the outlines of future collaboration in this young but cutting-edge domain of research in linguistics and aging.

Although important studies on related subjects have been published since the 1940s, the field of studies on language and age and its relationships has remained marginal to date in linguistics. Contrary to the demographic situation of contemporary societies, where the older age groups take part in a wide range of social activities, the older people are underrepresented in sociolinguistic panels. While in psycholinguistics 'normal aging' has turned out to be an important issue, it still has not obtained the status of 'normal' issues in linguistic research areas concerned with empirical data, as in sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and pragmatics.

The workshop aims to confront the challenges of situating research on age-related topics in the broader spectrum of linguistic fields and to promote interdisciplinary and cross-linguistic exchange. Summarizing the results reached so far will help to sharpen the questions of future research:

- What are the theoretical assumptions in the different fields of linguistics?
- What are the expectations on data usable in different disciplines?
- What contributions can we expect from linguistic research to a general theory of aging: selection, optimization and compensation (Freund & Baltes 2002), individual and age-specific variation (Labov 1994), cognitive evolutions (Kemper 2015), interaction (Coupland/Coupland 1990)?
- How to make results in language and aging research transferable and useful for healthcare professionals, caregivers, relatives, and the seniors themselves?

The academic program combines programmatic keynotes, the presentation of PhD projects, Data Sessions (speech, gesture and Sign Language corpus data), and Round Tables focusing on the most urgent research desiderata and the planning of joint future research projects.

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