Workshop ID :	8
Workshop Duration :	Workshop - 1 Day
Workshop Title :	**"How is this even coherent?" – Researching the dynamics of discourse in a globalised, digitalised world**
Workshop Leader :	**Heike Tappe**, University of KwaZulu-Natal

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The current workshop aims to explore linguistic consequences of globalization and digitalisation with a special focus on discourse patterns across languages. While there is persistent desire for globally accepted standardised norms, which provide both normativity and predictability, societies and speakers worldwide become increasingly multi-dialectal and multi-registered through mobility and displacement but also through multi-faceted language contact in digital media. Moreover there are loud and clear calls of hitherto marginalised communities to be acknowledged (e.g., "black lives matter"; "fees must fall", "standing rock"). As the world becomes more inter-connected and societies continuously become more diverse, the need to "grapple head-on with complexity" (Deumert 2014: 118) can no longer be side-lined; rather both linguistic theory as well as applications thereof - e.g. in language teaching and scientific knowledge dissemination - cannot afford to remain within the comfort-zone of 'canonical' patterns and structures.

We adopt the definition of discourse as "a coherent combination of sentences or sentence fragments that is the result of communication between participants, whether speaker and listener or writer and reader", as proposed by Wang and Guo (2014: 460). The central feature of discourse is coherence which is defined by Van Dijk (1977: 96) as a "semantic property of discourse, based on the interpretation of each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences"; i.e. discourse becomes coherent through an interplay between linguistic (cohesive) elements and the perceptions of interlocutors.

While theories on discourse were primarily developed on English data, languages vary considerably both in quantity and quality of the linguistic discourse features. Hence even though discourse organisation may share certain universal characteristics, speaker perceptions underlying discourse interpretation may be influenced by cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation at sentential and supra-sentential levels; e.g., Ren and Wang (2015) investigate discrepancies between Chinese and English thought patterns and potential effects on discourse organization. Ritzau (2015), Sui (2015) and Zhang (2015) investigate poly-languaging in multilingual writers; Frindéthié (2008) highlights 'non-canonical' sentential and macro-sentential features in African discourse (see also Tappe and Hara, 2013).

The current workshop invites data driven, empirical contributions to a critical discussion of linguistically diverse representations of discourse. The aims of the workshop are to challenge dominant, 'canonical' conventions of language practice in different circumstances. The overarching objective is to explore possibilities of, as well as necessities and constraints for, the emancipation of non-'canonical' discourse characteristics in both local and global language use in order to promote local and global social cohesion. In this context we will also discuss emerging new discourse conventions from multi-ethnolects and poly-languaging practices.

Possible topics include:

- Communicating inter-culturally: speaking and writing across cultures, intercultural (mis-)understandings
- Non-'canonical' discourse structures (narrative schemata, discourse- and text structures)
- Cross-linguistic coherence and variations across languages and cultures
- Lingua franca pragmatics
- (Im-)politeness phenomena (intention, cultural models, discourse and context)
- Science communication and scientific multilingualism: alternative ways of scientific knowledge dissemination

Selected References:

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