

2nd Workshop on Metaphor Variation in Englishes around the World
7-8 July 2016
University of Potsdam, Germany

Welcome speech

Anna:

Dear workshop participants!

Throughout the last months we have been planning this event and we are very happy that it is now actually taking place. There are a couple of other events during this week, for instance the RaAM 11 in Berlin or the PhD day of our graduate school at Potsdam University. Finding a date for this workshop was very difficult, but in the end we decided to engage in competition with the other surely very interesting events and are thus even more pleased that you are here. I already had the chance to meet some of you at last year's workshop and I am delighted to see that you accepted our invitation to come to Potsdam. More people who are still busy today will join us tomorrow and use the chance of attending the second workshop day.

The first *Workshop on Metaphor Variation in Englishes around the World* took place last year at the University of Bremen and was organised by Marcus Callies and Sarah Geers, who is also going to be here tomorrow. We are glad that the organisers were immediately thrilled when we offered to turn the workshop into a recurring event by bringing it to Potsdam this year. Alexander Onysko from the University of Klagenfurt already indicated that he might organise the next workshop, so we'll possibly see each other again next year in beautiful Austria. It looks like a Metaphor Variation in World Englishes community is emerging and we are very proud to be part of it.

Milene:

I would just like to quickly recall our workshop description. There, we stated that

“Even though congruency between conceptual metaphor studies and World Englishes can today be regarded as incontestable, these two areas of studies have paved independent paths in linguistic research for quite a long time. While cognitive-linguistic studies had long ignored cross-cultural variation in metaphor, World Englishes – where within-language variation is, of course, the core theme – mainly focused on certain overt linguistic phenomena.”

I would like to tell you two anecdotes to exemplify two points we made in this description. The first one is related to my participation in the 13th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference in Newcastle, England, in 2015. First of all, it should

be said it was a wonderful conference. It was my first real international conference and it was a pleasure to get to attend talks by lots of the scholars whose work I had read and who had become major references for my own work. Nevertheless, I was still taken by a feeling I somehow did not belong there. The studies sounded very interesting, however, they were so different from my own. Of course, this could have been a result of my own lack of experience and knowledge in Cognitive Linguistics, but I could not help noticing lots of the studies there still had nothing to say about how culture plays a role in cognition. So, there I was questioning myself if I was really in the right place and if I could possibly have any dialogue with cognitive linguists at all. Luckily, I later found out Cultural Linguistics made access to both possible: Cognitive Linguistics and culture.

The second anecdote is related to a literature survey I did when I wanted to teach two classes on World Englishes. I surveyed different references – especially of textbooks – on World Englishes. What I found were chapters and chapters devoted to phonological, syntactic and to a lesser extent also pragmatic differences, but no chapter at all referring to conceptual variation.

Of course there are exceptions to the tendency to keep metaphor studies and World Englishes apart from one another. We are delighted that two important scholars who have been arguing for closer contact between these two areas of studies take part in this workshop: Hans-Georg Wolf and Farzad Sharifian.

Hans-Georg Wolf has argued in favor of a hermeneutic approach to the study of Intercultural Communication and World Englishes; an approach that fosters understanding and not just merely strategic functioning in intercultural interactions.

Farzad Sharifian has advanced studies that unite cognitive processes and culture through the Cultural Linguistics paradigm. Cultural Linguistics has proven to be an excellent locus for the unification of metaphor studies and World Englishes.

Anna:

Let us take this chance to do a very brief overview on the field of study that the workshop is related to. During the first two decades or so after the advent of Conceptual Metaphor Theory that was put forward by Lakoff & Johnson in 1980, the question of metaphor variation within and across languages was not immediately addressed as a matter of priority. Among the pioneering studies, quite a few were rather concerned with the aspect of universality, i.e. similarities across languages and universal – or near-universal – conceptual metaphors.

Although Lakoff & Johnson stated at the very beginning that “the most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the most fundamental concepts in the culture”, it took some time until the potential of this claim was fully embraced. While some studies already dealt with distinct metaphorical systems and structures within the English language the notion of metaphors as culture-induced phenomena was not so much a hotly disputed topic.

Towards the end of the last millennium, *Cultural Linguistics* emerged as an interdisciplinary approach in which cultural aspects now intertwined with Cognitive Linguistics. At the same time, the convergence of sociolinguistic and cognitive-linguistic topics gave rise to the field of the rather empirically oriented *Cognitive Sociolinguistics*. In both branches, variationist issues came into focus almost naturally, and the varieties of English were promising candidates for metaphor variation. Since, as Wolf & Polzenhagen note, “culture is not an external category in linguistic investigations, but an integral dimension of it”, considerable within-language variation in respect of the existence and salience of specific conceptual metaphors is to be expected, seen the many distinct local cultural contexts within the English-speaking world. In fact, the examination of English varieties in the light of CMT (and vice versa) has indeed proven to be a fertile marriage for both paradigms.

Milene:

For this workshop, we came up with a corporate design held in green and grey in order to create some recall value. You saw it on the guideposts that led you here, and also on our website and the advertising posters and flyers.

Unfortunately, what we had to learn is that conferences don't always go as planned. Therefore, we had to make a few changes to the conference programme, but kept everyone updated via the website.

If you take your conference folders, you will find the final programme in there.

We start today with the keynote given by Farzad Sharifian. We would like to thank him very much for his immediate commitment when we asked to do us this favour. After his talk we will have time for a subsequent discussion.

The coffee break that follows takes place opposite this room in the Lesecafé. Coffee, tea and snacks will be provided during the break.

After that, there will be three talks and then we can all go to the mensa together during the lunch break. Those participants who paid the registration fee find their lunch tickets in their name tags.

In the afternoon there is a poster session in this room for which the posters will be set up during the lunch break. During this summer term, Anna gave a Bachelor seminar on the topic *Metaphor Variation in Englishes around the World*. This is not a coincidence, as students attending this seminar were meant to conduct small research projects that they would then present during this workshop. This also included the design and creation of research posters, which are the posters that will be displayed later. We hope that everyone will use the session to go around, take a look at the posters and engage in lively discussions with the students who are prepared to exchange with you. At this point, we would like to thank all the students for their

great efforts to make this poster session come true. There will be coffee and tea provided in the Lesecafé during the session.

Our conference dinner is the at 6.30 at restaurant “Zum Fliegenden Holländer” in the city centre of Potsdam. You find a description of how to get there in your conference folders.

After that, everyone who likes football can join us in going to the public viewing at Lustgarten in order to watch France playing Germany in the semi-final of the European Championship.

Tomorrow, we start at 10 am. The talks are again separated by a coffee break. After the last talk, there is another lunch break after which we will have a concluding discussion. We suggest to orient this discussion towards the question of what will happen next, how will the field of study that this workshop deals with develop in the nearer future. But of course, we can also include other questions that pop up today and tomorrow.

After the workshop closes, everyone taking part in the boat trip will have to rush to the city centre, as the boat leaves on time, namely at 4 pm sharp. A description of how to get there is also found in the conference folder.

Anna:

Last but not least, with every conference there are a number of people who are also involved in the process or organising, and who deserve explicit mention. We would like to especially thank the following people and institutions:

Marcus Callies and Sarah Geers from Bremen University for bringing this workshop into being and handing the baby over to our nurture in Potsdam.

Farzad Sharifian for not hesitating to accept our invitation to give the keynote.

Patrick Kühmstedt, who is also here today, for his great support with the revision of the students' posters.

Also of course the students who put their efforts into their projects and the design of their posters.

Our colleague Arne Peters who gave us some tips, and also our secretaries at the Department of English and American studies, Ms Lofing and Ms Heinze. They never got annoyed when we needed to ask them for yet another favour.

Hans-Georg Wolf has also supported us in many regards during the past months, not only concerning the organisation of this workshop, but also contentwise.

Furthermore, we are grateful to Max Planck Institute here in Potsdam. They lent us the racks for the posters, and their more than helpful technician Mr Ryschka did not back off from coming here personally in order to set them up.

We were also generously funded by the Potsdam Graduate School who is more than helpful in supporting PhD students and PostDocs to make researchers' dreams such as organising conferences come true.

A couple of publishers, namely John Benjamins, de Gruyter and Peter Lang, sent us promotional material without which we wouldn't have any conference folders or bags today.

And the last "Thank you!" goes to the crew of the Lesecafé who lets us have the coffee breaks at their premises and was in every regard friendly and helpful.

Finally, Hans-Georg Wolf sends us some words of welcome. He can't be here today, but is going to join us tomorrow. These are his greetings:

"Dear participants,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2nd *Workshop on Metaphor Variation in Englishes around the World* – we are honored that it takes place at our institute this year.

This thematic workshop is on its way to becoming a permanent institution, which bears evidence of the fruitfulness of the paradigm you are working in and its broad range of applicability. As we all know, conceptual metaphor theory provides a window to the rich cultural fabrics underlying the global varieties of Englishes, a fact that is increasingly being recognized by the World Englishes community at large.

Allow me to thank Anna and Milene for organizing this workshop. Anna and Milene really put their hearts in it and managed everything single-handedly, with some help by Patrick Kühmstedt and Marlies Lofing.

Unfortunately, due to another commitment, I will not be able to attend today's session but look forward to joining you tomorrow.

I wish you/us two exciting days with stimulating talks and discussions and plenty of opportunities to forge and deepen academic partnerships – but also time to socialize and enjoy Potsdam and perhaps Berlin.

Hans-Georg"

We hope that today and tomorrow we will engage in lively and fruitful discussions about the topic of metaphor variation in World Englishes, and that we spend an inspiring time together.

Thank you very much!