Arts and Philosophy PhD day

29 May 2017

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

UResidence Conference Center
(Brussels Engineering, Sciences & Humanities Campus)

On May 29th 2017, the faculty of Arts and Philosophy will organize the first edition of its yearly PhD event. In order to stimulate a vivid exchange of ideas, both within and across disciplines, mostly 2nd and 3rd year PhD students will present their ongoing research to an a audience of peers, fellow researchers and faculty, with time for feedback, questions and comments.

PROGRAM

09:00 – 09:15	Welcome
09:15 – 09:25	Prof. Dr. **Karin Nys** (Dean of the faculty of Arts and Philosophy): Word of welcome
09:25 – 09:45	Dr. **Hannelore De Grande** (Central PhD Office): Wellbeing of PhD students
09:45 – 10:45	Presentations by PhD students (4): (chair: Prof. Dr. Inge Arteel) – **Pieter Present** (HARP-FILO): Pieter van Musschenbroek (1692-1761) as educator: a historical and philosophical investigation – **Olivier Couder** (LIST-TALK): What's so funny? Absurdist humour in absurdist literature from a cognitive perspective – **Koen Lefever** (HARP-FILO): Comparing classical kinematics and special relativity theory in first order logic – **Renee Moernaut** (LIST-TTKA): Technical defect or human haughtiness? The multimodal framing of climate change in mainstream and alternative media
10:45 – 11:00	COFFEE BREAK
11:00 – 12:30	Presentations by PhD students (6): (chair: Prof. Dr. Wim Vandenbussche) – **Tatiana Pieters** (LIST-TALK): Heterogeneity of grammatical gender in L1 systems and its cross-linguistic influence on SLA acquistion of French. – **Nigel Vinckier** (HARP-FILO): Chunk and permeate: expansion and philosophical discussion – **Clara Escalona Falcon** (LIST-TALK): The approach of lexical ambiguity caused by false cognates in Spanish-German and German-Spanish translation – **Ward Leloup** (HARP-HIST): Socio-occupational spaces in comparative perspective. Bruges and Mechelen, 14th – 16th centuries – **Marjolein Schepers** (HARP-HIST): Poor migrants or mobile labourers? Rural-urban relations in regulating migration in the border regions of eighteenth-century Flanders and France – **Dan Xu** (HARP-SKAR): Is copy really copy?
12:30 – 13:30	WALKING LUNCH

13:30 – 13:45	Prof. Dr. **Caroline Pauwels** (Rector of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel): Word of welcome
13:45 – 15:00	Presentations by PhD students (5): (chair: Prof. Dr. Rik Vosters) – **Soudabeh Nour** (LIST-TTKA): How specific is the effect of interpreter training on working memory? A longitudinal comparison between interpreter and translator students – **Chang Liu** (LIST-TALK): Effects of language-related factors on mathematic skills in bilinguals – **Nick Van den Broeck** (HARP-HIST): Paying for deservingness? Poor relief administration, entitlement and local economies in the Southern Low Countries (1750-1830) – **Sven Delarivière** (HARP-FILO): Artificial mathematicians: mathematical understanding and its possible automation – **Alyssa Verhees** (LIST-TALK): The artwork as thing and representation in the works of Stefan Hertmans and Huub Beurskens
15:00 – 15:15	COFFEE BREAK
15:15 – 16:30	Presentations by PhD students (5): (chair: Prof. Dr. Karen François) – **Kim Collewaert** (LIST-TALK): The use of referential mechanisms in oral narratives of learners of Spanish – **Dirk Lafaut** (HARP-FILO): Medical regularization: an avenue to recognition or a permit to die? Axel Honneth put into practice – **Ruilin Wu** (LIST-TALK): The psycholinguistic approach to CLIL study in China: trilingual education in Uyghur-Putonghua-English – **Ping Liang** (LIST-TTKA): China's national image through political translation: past and present – **Jelten Baguet** (HARP-HIST): Elites: a social and economic analysis. The case of sixteenth-century Ghent
16:30 – 17:00	Prof. Dr. **Jean Paul Van Bendegem** (HARP-FILO): Closing address: The importance of being researcher
17:00 – 17:30	CLOSING RECEPTION

Pieter van Musschenbroek (1692-1761) as educator: a historical and philosophical investigation

Pieter Present (HARP-FILO)

The Dutch Republic played an important role in the dissemination of Newton's philosophy. There, it found its earliest proponents, who were also instrumental in the spread of the Newton's ideas on the continent. Two pivotal figures in this regard were Willem J. 's Gravesande and Pieter van Musschenbroek. They both occupied positions at Dutch universities, and have been acknowledged in the literature to have helped the spread of Newton's ideas through their teaching and textbooks. Despite a recent rise in popularity, the topic of education has not received a detailed treatment in the field of history and philosophy of science. In this presentation, I argue for the fruitfulness of focussing on education in the spread of Newton's philosophy on the continent. I will show how analysing the teaching activities of Pieter van Musschenbroek, and situating them in their institutional, societal, and material context, can provide us with a richer historical and philosophical insight into the development of Newtonian thought and eighteenth century experimental philosophy in general.

What's so funny? Absurdist humour in absurdist literature from a cognitive perspective

Olivier Couder (LIST-TALK)

My research project looks at the role and function of absurdist humour in absurdist literature through the lens of cognitive literary theory, specifically schema theory. The mainstay of the project is the interaction between absurdist humour on the one hand and narrative elements such as character, plot, and setting that structure novels on the other hand. A better understanding of the mechanisms underlying absurdist humour enhances our understanding of absurdist literature, as it proves essential to the narrative structure of absurdist novels. Cognitive theories of humour posit that the humorous experience can best be described, and explained, in terms of incongruities (or "script-oppositions") and their subsequent resolution, with absurdist humour being a special type of humour where incongruity remains (largely) unresolved. My doctoral research, therefore, aims to successfully integrate schema theory, cognitive humour theory and literary theory in order to develop a working model for the literary analysis of a corpus consisting of a selection of absurdist novels. The project thus aims to elucidate the different aspects important to the interpretation of absurdist humour in literary texts, i.e. the text (both on the level of style and content), the reader and the context. The emphasis of the project on the process of interpretation and the analysis of an actual corpus of absurdist novels also goes beyond the scope of traditional humour theory research which tends to limit itself to short and often specifically designed jokes. The corpus consists of American, absurdist novels covering a period from 1961 (the publication date of Catch-22, which serves as a touchstone for the theoretical model) until present day. It is comprised of novels which are widely recognised for their absurdist qualities and which have consistently been identified as humorous (works by Heller, Brautigan, Vonnegut, Dorsey, Moore, and Hiaasen). The inclusion of these novels in the corpus is motivated in part on the basis of my personal evaluation as well as on the basis of a thorough review of extant literary criticism (by both academic and non-academic readers) on these authors and their work, which provides a counterweight of sorts to the subjectivity inherent to the humorous experience. Humour, however, is a multi-faceted phenomenon, and it is impossible to provide an exhaustive study of all these aspects within the scope of this project. I have therefore decided to limit the corpus to a specific geographical space, namely the United States. And while I am aware that the US cannot simply be

considered as one socio-cultural homogenous space, it nevertheless provides a measure of consistency in terms of its cultural context (important for both humour's production and experience). By temporally spreading out the corpus (ca. 10 years between novels) the project aims to chart the use and (possible) evolution of absurdist humour within one and the same geographical region.

Comparing classical kinematics and special relativity theory in first order logic

Koen Lefever (HARP-FILO)

This is a study in philosophy of science on using mathematical methods to compare scientific theories.

We present a new logic based understanding of the connection between special relativity and classical kinematics.

We show that the axioms of special relativity can be interpreted in the language of classical kinematics. This means that there is a logical translation function from the language of special relativity to the language of classical kinematics which translates the axioms of special relativity into consequences of classical kinematics.

We will also show that if we distinguish a class of observers (representing observers stationary with respect to the ``Ether'') in special relativity and exclude the non-slower-than light observers from classical kinematics by an extra axiom, then the two theories become definitionally equivalent (i.e., they become equivalent theories in the sense as the theory of lattices as algebraic structures is the same as the theory of lattices as partially ordered sets).

Furthermore, we show that classical kinematics is definitional equivalent to classical kinematics with only slower-than-light inertial observers, and hence by transitivity of definitional equivalence that special relativity theory extended with ``Ether'' is definitional equivalent to classical kinematics.

So within an axiomatic framework of mathematical logic, we explicitly show that the transition from classical kinematics to special relativity is the knowledge acquisition of that there is no "Ether".

Technical defect or human haughtiness? The multimodal framing of climate change in mainstream and alternative media

Renee Moernaut (LIST-TTKA)

Climate change is the threat of the 21st century. However, the future partly depends on the ways in which the media present the issue: the climate change frames the media provides us with are likely to influence the ways in which we think and talk about, and act upon, the climate. Quite some research has been concerned with the framing of climate change. This has demonstrated, among others, that most of the current frames do not sufficiently engage the audience. Yet, some major questions remain. Alternative media, which are more likely to provide different (i.e., potentially more engaging) frames, are largely overlooked. Also, little is known about the interaction of visual and verbal information in media articles. However, the visual mode is generally accepted to be highly influential. The lack of a more comprehensive, multimodal framing analysis method, in particular, hampers such developments. Finally, there is a need to better understand the production process of the frames in newsrooms. This may give us a better insight into the (hegemonic) influences and intended meanings reproduced by the frames. In order to address these questions, I have conducted a multimodal framing analysis on a corpus of 1260 news articles from 3 mainstream (De Standaard, De Morgen, Het Laatste Nieuws) en 2 alternative (DeWereldMorgen and MO*) Flemish outlets. All articles published between 28

February 2012 and 28 February 2014 focusing on climate change were selected. Additionally, I have conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 reporters, news chiefs, photo editors and NGO representatives in November and December 2016. These were directly linked to a framing analysis of the climate change articles published by the interviewees in December 2016. In my presentation I will first provide an overview of the multimodal framing analysis toolkit I have developed and employed. This toolkit allows for the analysis of frames on various levels (ranging from 'participants and attributes' to 'intertextuality') in the visual and verbal modes and in multimodal interactions. As such, it may constitute an important contribution to the current framing research.

Next, I will discuss the 5 multimodal masterframes (Cycles of Nature, Environmental Justice, Economic Challenge, Human Rights, Inscrutable are the Ways of Nature) and 10 underlying ideologically colored subframes identified in the corpus. I will distinguish among anthropocentric (i.e., human-centered) and biocentric subframes, demonstrating how different types of frames can reproduce and naturalize different (more or less constructive) ways to interact with nature and others, depoliticizing or rather repoliticizing the debate.

These frames will, finally, be linked to the newsroom contexts, organized as a 'machine' or rather as an 'organism', they originated in. Comparing the two broad types of media organizations in terms of news beats, role perceptions, news values/routines, linguistic and visual awareness and (ideological) cultures, will help to clarify why certain (alternative) contexts are more likely to give rise to repoliticizing frames than others.

While these findings may contribute to the (development) of the academic field of climate change communication, they may also provide interesting guidelines and insights for media professionals.

Heterogeneity of grammatical gender in L1 systems and its cross-linguistic influence on SLA acquistion of French.

Tatiana Pieters (LIST-TALK)

The present study assesses whether heterogeneity in the L1 grammatical gender (GG) systems of English and German impacts mastery of gender assignment in French as a second language (FL2). It departs from two dimensions of the term "heterogeneity" in relation to GG: (a) an intersystemic heterogeneity, i.e. the main principles that govern gender assignment in the three languages and conversely (b), intrasystemic incoherencies within the GG system of a peculiar language:

(a) Indo-European languages often express GG by two or three values, masculine and feminine and certain languages, like German, distinguish a third neutral value. The way in which one of these values is allocated to a noun depends on semantic, phonological and morphological assignment criteria that are combined in an assignment system (AS, Corbett 1991). However, we find disparities in the hierarchy of these allocation principles according to the studied language:

- The French AS is primarily phonological (cues on last phonemes of the noun).
- The English AS is exclusively semantic (no formal cues).
- The German AS is has no predominant cues.

(b) Intrasystemic incoherences stem from the fact that, although the French AS is mainly based on phonological criteria, it includes secondary morphological and semantic cues, rendering it heterogeneous.

Pilot data is collected from two groups of FL2 learners of different L1 backgrounds (German, English) and a monolingual French speaking control group of 10 to 15 participants aged between 9 and 11. The examination of the (possible) correlation between the position of the L1 systems with

respect to the French system and the performances of the FL2 learners will enable us to verify two hypotheses derived from results of previous studies (Dewaele & Véronique 2001, Sabourin et al. 2006): (1) The overuse of the masculine gender as a "default gender" will be most apparent among English-speaking FL2 learners, since their L1 already tends to eliminate the distinction between the masculine and the feminine GG. (2) German-speaking learners will commit fewer mistakes in FL2 than English-speaking participants because, unlike English, German has the GG feature, rendering them more sensitive to the French system than their English-speaking peers, and enabling them to transfer their knowledge from L1 to FL2.

Chunk and permeate: expansion and philosophical discussion

Nigel Vinckier (HARP-FILO)

The early calculus used a curious concept: the infinitesimal, an entity which is infinitely small. However, "infinitely small" seems to mean zero and non-zero at the same time, making this concept unacceptable to today's standards. There are deep metaphysical but also logical-technical problems with this infinitesimal concept. It was eliminated by the so-called ε-δ-approach to limits in the beginning of the 19th century. But somehow we remain fascinated by the concept of the infinitesimal. It was the motivation for Robinson (1966) to develop non-standard analysis. But can we provide a rational reconstruction of the early infinitesimal practice? A new strategy to deal with their inconsistency was developed by Brown & Priest (2004) and Sweeney (2013). The inconsistency is tamed by splitting the information into two "chunks", one where the infinitesimal is non-zero and one where it is zero. Calculations are performed by setting up specific rules for equations to "permeate" between the chunks. The technique ("chunk & permeate") is then shown to preserve consistency: we do not arrive at a contradiction – the inconsistency of the infinitesimal is thus "tamed". The strategy only works, however, for specific functions. In my article, I show how the permeability relation can be altered to account for a broader category of "interesting" functions. This shows a nice link with non-standard analysis. After this technical result, I discuss the role of C&P as a rational reconstruction strategy, operating in the tension between "closeness to practice" versus "recasting in contemporary logic".

The approach of lexical ambiguity caused by false cognates in Spanish-German and German-Spanish translation

Clara Escalona Falcon (LIST-TALK)

The purpose of the study is twofold. First, it wants to contribute to theory construction in translation studies regarding the definition and explanation of the lexical ambiguity caused by false cognates (Geeraerts, 2013 and Sekino, 2015). Second, the outcomes of the study will be the basis for the design of a didactic strategy in translation studies in order to reduce the lexical ambiguity caused by false cognates in Spanish- German, German- Spanish Translation.

In linguistics, false cognates are defined as words in two or more languages that seem to have a common origin, but etymological studies have proven them not to have any relationship. Moreover, they are graphically and phonetically similar, but the meaning is different (Kroshewski, 2000). The review of the literature on lexical ambiguity caused by false cognates reveals two main approaches: a cognitive approach related to the cognitive processes involved when confronted with lexical ambiguity (Sekino, 2015) and a corpus- based approach focusing on the linguistic context (Geeraerts, 2013). These approaches lead to the following research questions:

1. What cognitive processes cause and effect errors caused by lexical ambiguity concerning false cognate (Spanish-German)?

2. What aspects of the linguistic context influence these cognitive processes?

3. In what way do these findings contribute to theory construction in translation studies?

The questions will be answered by means of a triangulation of methods (Think-aloud protocols, linguistic- context analysis of translated texts and a survey for translation teachers).

Preliminary results show that:

1. Trainees´ translations are affected by lexical ambiguity when false cognates appears, which might indicate a failure in the cognitive processes of noticing, selecting, and solving.

2. Lexical ambiguity is generally not thoroughly treated in translation classes.

Socio-occupational spaces in comparative perspective. Bruges and Mechelen, 14th – 16th centuries

Ward Leloup (HARP-HIST)

The spatial organization of social groups and economic activities in urban landscapes has long attracted the attention of geographers, economists, sociologists, and historians alike. From a historical perspective, research into this topic has known a revival over the past decades, instigated by the spatial turn and the introduction of new research tools such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Such research, however, is mostly concerned with the (early) modern city and empirical studies of the socio-occupational topography of late medieval cities remain scarce and mostly limited to snapshots or narrow case studies. Nevertheless, building on the works of social geographers like Gideon Sjoberg (1955) and James Vance (1971), scholars often assume the social and economic geography of cities changed dramatically exactly during the transitional period between the medieval and early modern eras. Where the medieval city was characterized by occupational clusters, to which many street names still attest, these would have disappeared by the sixteenth century and made way for a socio-spatial organisation of the city according to locational economics and the principles of the real estate market. With my research project, I want to empirically test and elaborate this hypothesis. To that end, I will explore the socio-occupational topography of two case cities in the Southern Low Countries – Bruges and Mechelen – between the fourteenth and the sixteenth century. On a neighbourhood level I will reconstruct the spatial patterns in the distribution of a selection of occupational groups and the evolutions therein throughout the studied period. Besides I want to retrieve which circumstances and processes shaped these patterns and evolutions. Bruges and Mechelen experienced similar social and economic developments in the period under consideration and are therefore suitable for a comparative study. Conversely there is the unicity of the urban landscape and the morphology of both cities. The question then arises in how far the socio-occupational topography was determined by the given spatial framework and to what extent social and economic actors could (re)shape this topography in the light of a changing historical context. In explanation of the revealed patterns and evolutions in the urban socio-occupational topography, I will therefore focus on the interplay between the urban space on the one hand, and the broader historical socio-economic developments and the consequently changing interests of specific groups to settle on a specific location in the city on the other hand.

Poor migrants or mobile labourers? Rural-urban relations in regulating migration in the border regions of eighteenth-century Flanders and France

Marjolein Schepers (HARP-HIST)

This project is concerned with the paradox of community based poor relief and cross-community mobility. In early modern Europe, the parish was the responsible entity to provide assistance to the poor, but mobility and migration complicated this local phenomenon. If migrants became poor, where should they turn to? Criteria for migrants' access to poor relief varied througgout time and space. The distinction between 'own' and 'strange' poor became an increasingly stringent issue for local, regional and central governments in France and Flanders. Different regulations followed each other swiftly, and local agreements existed alongside central legislation. This project focusses on a local regulation, the concordat of Ypres, which was signed on June 6, 1750 and lasted until the end of the Ancien Régime. It was a transnational agreement between cities and rural districts in West Flanders and Northern France. The concordat stipulated that access to relief was located in the birthplace, thereby ensuring free movement within its boundaries and abolishing the obligation for migrants to present caution sums or warranty letters when they entered a new town. This agreement forms an excellent case study to analyse poor relief and access to relief on the continent in detail, to analyse the divergence between local interests and national policies, to get deeper into rural and urban relations in negotiating migration regulation and 'belonging', and to contribute a historical perspective to the debates on welfare and mobility.

Is copy really copy?

Dan Xu (HARP-SKAR)

When speaking of copy, people often think about Shanzhai, the copycat phenomenon in China. The act of copy reveals a totally different understanding on the Original, which is deeply rooted, in Chinese culture.

While we all know Chinese artists attributed past masterpieces, or masters who established a unique style through copy, was quite common in traditional art. In fact, it only became a trend from late Ming Dynasty. In other words, the relation between artists now and past masters changed vastly, as well as the standard of "good art". Also, the Platonism archetype and simulacrum were missing in Chinese culture structure. On the contrary, the existence of either artwork or human being is deemed as a part of grand form, which is constantly in the linear process of changing. This theory might offer an answer to that why Chinese artists/collectors/emperors always left their own marks on a masterpiece.

The cases of copy in contemporary art world, in the post-industrial era, are becoming extremely complex. Dafen village in South China are producing thousands of hand-made copies of world-renowned paintings every day, and selling to clients all over the world. In Western art world, avant-garde artists in early 20th century and the conceptual artists in mid-20th century embraced the dematerialization of art, as well as the reenactment and copy. We should ask again, what do copy and original mean today? More questions, answers and inspirations might be found in the unavoidable crossover of two cultures and art.

How specific is the effect of interpreter training on working memory? A longitudinal comparison between interpreter and translator students

Soudabeh Nour (LIST-TTKA)

Working memory (WM) plays an important role in Interpreting performance and has become the subject of different studies. In this study we investigate the effect of interpreter training on different components of WM including both storage and processing using a longitudinal design. Our main research question was whether we could replicate previous working memory advantages related to interpreter training and, if so, whether these advantages are equally present in translators. The participants were 16 students enrolled in the MA programme of Interpreting (MAge= 22) and 12 students enrolled in the MA programme of Translation (MAge= 23), both at Vrije University Brussels. All participants were tested at the beginning and at the end of their one-year MA programmes. The test battery included reading span tests (RST) in first (L1) and second language (L2) and a digit span test. Critically, the result showed a significant effect of time, $F(1,25) = 39.67$, $p < .001$, but no significant effect of group, $F(1,25) = 846.09$, $p > .05$ and no interaction effect between group and time, $F(1,25) = .04$, $p > .05$; all participants showed improvement on their reading span scores both in L1 and L2; however these improvements did not depend on the type of their training (translator or interpreter). Finally, no improvement in digit span scores was observed. Our results show that working memory advantages traditionally associated to interpreter training may also be seen in student-translators. Even though translation and interpreting rely on the use of different language modalities, translator training may tap into similar control processes as interpreting; and both types of training may result in comparable working memory progress. Future studies on interpreting and working memory should include control groups of translators and non-translators. Furthermore, translation scholars might be interested in investigating the relationship between translation performance and language control.

Effects of language-related factors on mathematic skills in bilinguals

Chang Liu (LIST-TALK)

There is diverse behavioral, developmental and neurological evidence showing that language plays an important role in the development and performance of arithmetic skills. The fields of bilingualism and math cognition have been investigated relatively separately from one another. Although there has been a substantial amount of research conducted in both areas, few studies have examined mathematical processes as they relate to bilinguals.

Solving arithmetic problems is a cognitive task that heavily relies on language processing. Given the critical role of language in arithmetic problem solving, one might thus wonder whether this language-reliance leads to qualitative differences in arithmetic for bilingual individuals who frequently solve arithmetic problems in more than one language. Previous evidence showed that several elements concerning language naming system, the structure of number words, as well as the mastery of languages (e.g., language proficiency) in the involved languages directly modulate bilinguals' performances in arithmetic. Theoretically, there have also been mathematical models applied to bilingual samples: one such is the encoding-complex model, which have been extended to Chinese-English bilinguals.

By performing mental calculations, the effects of word length, preferred language, compatibility and number word structure as well as traditional effects such as the split effect and confusion effect were found across studies. However, the effects of language-related factors are still not clear since language differ in how they represent numerical information.

The ongoing research aims to investigate what and how language-related factors contribute to influence bilingual numerical processing in young adults. We address these issues in a Chinese-French bilingual setting. Importantly, Chinese and French differ in language naming system (e.g., word length) and the structure of number words (e.g., base 10 vs. base 20). The study proposes to carefully categorize bilingual participants by using the Language Experience and Proficiency Questionnaire (LEAP-Q). This study also aims at building on a study (Van Rinsveld et al., 2015) that examined effects of calculation complexity and number word structure in German-French bilinguals. In that study, both language proficiency levels and number word structure affected bilingual simple arithmetic performances. However, involving with another different typological language Chinese, we would like to know what and how those language-related effects influence arithmetic performances in Chinese-French bilinguals.

A final aim of the current study is to use well-known mathematical tasks to examine the Encoding Complex Model and see if that model could be extended from Chinese-English bilinguals to other types of bilinguals or if the model could be adapted in some way to accommodate other types of bilinguals. It is important to know if the model could adapt to bilinguals who are not so fluent in L2.

Paying for deservingness? Poor relief administration, entitlement and local economies in the Southern Low Countries (1750-1830)

Nick Van den Broeck (HARP-HIST)

As numerous research has shown, the causes of poverty, and the relief practices to mitigate them, are not God-given. Poverty is not a 'natural' or unavoidable feature of a society, and it remains the question why certain relief-practices came into existence and how they are used. History offers us an interesting laboratory that helps us to understand the logic behind these practices. In my PhD-research, I focus on rural poor relief institutions between 1750 and 1830 in the Southern Low Countries. Many causes for poor relief practices have been identified in existing research, which have been framed at different levels of analysis (i.c. (supra-)national, regional and local). Great emphasis is placed on the English/Wales case. Some authors explicitly or implicitly emphasize that the English poor relief system was unique from the introduction of the Old Poor Law(1598/1601) onwards due to its uniform, tax-based, compulsory nature. Other authors stress the uniqueness in terms of its scale and elaborateness. Recent studies however question the exceptionality of the English 'national' case. By focusing on socio-economic background, the existence of different regional practices is emphasized. However, emphasis on regional distinctions in turn rests uneasy with available evidence of considerable local autonomy and variation at parish level. Attempts at systematically identifying and evaluating 'national', regional and local variations in poor relief administration remain frustrated by the very skewed nature of available studies, with their heavy emphasis on England and Wales or, in as far as continental Europe is addressed, urban settings. While this means that Poor Law research for England is far more developed than for any other European region, much is to be gained by deploying the insights and arguments from English historiography to continental cases in order to develop a truly comparative approach to similarities and differences in poor relief organisation, and to systematically evaluate determinants and consequences of spatial and temporal variations. Therefore, I aim to identify and explain spatial variations and temporal changes in revenues raised for the relief of the poor, conceptions of entitlement and belonging, and survival strategies in the Southern Low Countries in the period 1750-1830. By investigating the interconnections of these themes at local, regional and 'national' levels of analysis in a period of profound social, political, economic and institutional change, I aim to contribute to a renewed comparative approach to the determinants and consequences of poor relief organization in Europe's transition from preindustrial to industrial society.

This question will be addressed by implementing three regions with a different socio-economic structure and that are representative for a number of variables, argued to have been crucial to poor relief development in existing studies.

Artificial mathematicians: mathematical understanding and its possible automation

Sven Delarivière (HARP-FILO)

The subject of my PhD is to explore the (im)possibility of artificial mathematical understanding for automated theorem proving.

Computers are only fairly recently being used in the practice of mathematics. As mathematics has a reputation for being the formal, deductive science, it was hoped that its automation would quickly lead to impressive results. Not so. Automated theorem provers have progressed slowly and produced little that's relevant to existing mathematical questions or problems. Mathematics has shown itself to be much more dependent on the undefined quality of informal understanding than formal deduction. This lack of understanding in computer systems gets criticized, but the critique is vague and little seems to be done to investigate what this (informal) understanding might actually or preferably entail as well as how and how successfully or poorly automated mathematics is attempting to alleviate that deficiency.

Philosophical debate concerning "understanding" as an epistemological notion has gained some attention in recent times, but the debate lacks some order and the notion of mathematical understanding in particular remains largely unexplored. I have developed a framework for conceptualising (mathematical) understanding and by defend a functional characterisation of it in particular. The functional reading equates the property of understanding with the possession of appropriate abilities (thereby sidelining the feeling of understanding so distrusted about the notion). Which abilities are appropriate requires us to take a look at mathematical practice. Starting from accounts of mathematical practice, I investigate how and which informal moves augment mathematical abilities, focusing on two activities (involved in proving) in particular: social dynamics and concept formation.

These philosophical investigations are preparation to consider the possibility of automating mathematical understanding. Whether it will indeed be possible to do automate mathematical understanding is not a claim I can substantiate, nor will I try to, but I will argue against the thesis that the search for automated mathematical understanding is doomed to fail. I will then look into the available literature regarding attempted automation and conduct an extensive investigation of multiple case studies to interpret their results and recognise its prospects and flaws. The results of my analysis will furthermore be used to reassess the general discussion on mathematical understanding and its informal moves.

The artwork as thing and representation in the works of Stefan Hertmans and Huub Beurskens

Alyssa Verhees (LIST-TALK)

Research on artworks in novels and poetry traditionally focusses on 'ekphrasis' and 'intersemiotic translation'. The ekphrastic text is merely seen as a possibility for intertextuality and word/image studies. Even though these approaches are interesting, most researchers overlook the fact that artworks are 'independent objects in their own right, which resemble other objects or things in the world' (Bilman 2013: 36). Ever since the thingly turn there's an increasing amount of attention paid

to these objects and things – even in literary studies (Brown 2001, 2003; Tischleder 2014). The way a described artwork is embedded in the text and the function of this object in the plot can for example influence the interpretation of a novel.

In my research, I want to combine theories of intermediality, word/image studies and thing theory. I'll do this on three levels. My starting point is the reader, who needs to recognize the ekphrastic text as a description of an artwork and who therefore depends on signals, given by the author or the publisher (pragmatic level). On the secondary level (syntactic), I pay attention to the structure of the described artwork-as-thing and artwork-as-representation and to the function of the artwork in the narrative, in regards to the character and to the depiction of time and space. If there's an image of the artwork included in the text, I also explore how it is composed. The third level (semantic), examines the meaning of (the picture of) both the artwork-as-thing as the artwork-as-representation, so I can determine how these influence the meaning of a novel.

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The use of referential mechanisms in oral narratives of learners of Spanish

Kim Collewaert (LIST-TALK)

The general objective of my PhD project is to investigate how Dutch-speaking learners of Spanish establish reference in oral discourse and how this process is affected by a number of linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Firmly embedded in the cognitive linguistics tradition, the study is primarily based upon theories on information structure and referent accessibility (Ariel 1990, Chafe 1976, Givón 1983, Gundel et al. 1993, Lambrecht 1994, Prince 1981, etc.). In short, these studies propose that when a referent is assumed to be highly accessible in the interlocutor's mind, less explicit semantic content is needed, while for lowly accessible referents, more semantic content needs to be provided. Ariel's accessibility scale – and its adaptation to Spanish by Figueras (2002) – will be used to present an inventory of the referential expressions used by the learners of Spanish. After elaborating the theoretical framework, the (non-)linguistic factors which are assumed to influence accessibility will be discussed, e.g. recency and frequency of mention (Ariel 1990, Givón 1983, Vázquez Rosas 2004, Van Vliet 2008), presence of potential competitors (Arnold & Griffin 2007, Serratrice 2013, Van Vliet 2008) or the influence of visual context (Fukumura & Van Gompel 2010, Serratrice 2013). Finally, the corpus of oral narratives, produced by Dutch-speaking university majors of Spanish and by a control group of Spanish native speakers, will be presented. The data were cross-sectionally collected at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel by means of a story-retelling task, based on the Spanish telenovela Yo soy Bea.

Medical regularization: an avenue to recognition or a permit to die? Axel Honneth put into practice

Dirk Lafaut (HARP-FILO)

Over the last 20 years the Geneva Convention is being interpreted in an increasingly restrictive way in Europe. Simultaneously, in the early 2000's, a legislation emerged in several European countries (amongst others in Belgium and France) that allowed to grant undocumented migrants a residence

permit for medical and humanitarian reasons. In other words, where political grounds for recognition are progressively questioned, health problems, severe illnesses and more general the 'suffering body' could still lead to a residence permit and social protection, thus offering a possibility for recognition.

In this presentation we will link this practice of regularization for medical reasons to the concept of recognition, as it has been developed by Axel Honneth. In The struggle for recognition Honneth formulates three different and complementary patterns of recognition. We use this tripartite division as a tool that allows us to make a multidimensional, detailed and critical analysis of this specific practice of recognition in a context of vulnerability and migration. We further complement these considerations with elements from recent work of Judith Butler.

Our analysis problematizes the applicability of conceptions of human vulnerability to ground practices of recognition. Firstly, we conclude that in medical recognition, the suffering or infirm body becomes the ultimate site of recognition. However, what is considered a universal biological feature, in practice clearly is a racialized, gendered and historically determined concept. Moreover, due to its 'rewarding' of reduced bodily integrity we note that its application can have degrading 'side-effects'. Secondly, in terms of the application of rights, we observe the existence of inconsistency and arbitrariness, as well as the lack of independence and deontological pre-conditions in the medical judgement. Thirdly, our analysis shows that when a subject is reduced to a specific pathological attribute of its humanness, this has negative consequences for the social value and esteem of the subjects involved.

The psycholinguistic approach to CLIL study in China: trilingual education in Uyghur-Putonghua-English

Ruilin Wu (LIST-TALK)

Uyghurs living in their own autonomous region in the north-western part of China are counted as an ethnic minority compared to the large population of Han majority. Within the present education system in China, the ethnic minorities are required to learn their native language (L1), a mainstream language (L2), i.e. Putonghua (also referred to as Standard Chinese, or simply known as Mandarin), as well as a foreign language, usually English (L3). The primary focus of my research is the study on multilingual representations of Uyghur-Putonghua-English speakers in China from a psycholinguistic perspective of view.

There is a long debate about the existence of a biologically based critical period hypothesis for language acquisition. One objective of my research is to investigate whether age of L2 acquisition to be one of the factors governing the trilingual representations. It is to explore the lexical selection mechanism in language production and lexical access in language reproduction by means of picture naming and lexical decision tasks. Compared with those late CLIL trilinguals, it is to see whether the early age of L2 will cause a difference in reaction time and response accuracy.

Primarily, there are two prevailing language teaching approaches adopted at schools for educating Uyghur minority students into trilingual individuals. One explicit approach under the principle of didactic teaching is to teach non-native languages as language courses with a traditional grammar translation method. The other one refers to an implicit pedagogical approach, i.e. Content and Language Integrated Learning (hereinafter referred to as CLIL). This CLIL approach-based trilingual education model, though at present carried out on the experimental stage in China, is both linguistically and pedagogically worthwhile to quantitatively explore its effectiveness and reliability. To fill in the gap of research, the second research objective is to compare the Uyghur trilingual individuals educated in different language teaching approaches. That is, it is to investigate whether the CLIL trilinguals have a more significant performance in response time and accuracy than those

non-CLIL counterparts. Behavioural experiments will be designed to examine the representation and connection of the three languages by naming the images and deciding lexicons.

The third research objective is to apply cognitive control tasks, such as Simon task, or Attention Network Task to examining the effectiveness of CLIL trilingual education model with a comparison of non-CLIL one in the aspect of cognition development of Uyghur ethnic minority students. There is a hypothesis that the executive control mechanisms in charge of resolving competition in linguistic settings are similar to the control mechanism in the domains of perception, attention, or action. That is, it is assumed that there is a multilingual advantage in cognitive task involving conflict resolution.

China's national image through political translation: past and present
Ping Liang (LIST-TTKA)

In my PhD I study Chinese political discourses and their English translations. Political discourse is often an institutionalized structure of meanings that conveys a certain political thought and entails action (Van Dijk 1995). It reflects not only political, but also social and cultural values. In the context of globalization, translation has become an important means to foster international communication between China and the world. Chinese political discourse relies on translation to be understood by the international community. This study draws upon the cultural politics of translation and sees translation as an ideologically-constrained and socio-culturally-situated practice. Applying the approaches of critical discourse analysis and socio-culturally oriented linguistic pragmatics, my research explores the interaction between ideology and the translation of political texts. The study takes both diachronic and synchronic stances. It first views the history by analysing the translation of treaties in early Sino-British relations, and how translation is used by translators as a tool in power relations. The second part, which is ongoing, focuses on the current English translation of Chinese political terms and expressions as a government-sponsored project for the purpose of China's international publicity. Comparing them with the same terms translated by western media, the study aims to examine the difference in translation and to analyse the reasons behind them.

Elites: a social and economic analysis. The case of sixteenth-century Ghent
Jelten Baguet (HARP-HIST)

In historical research scholars have devoted considerable attention to the study of early modern urban political elites. Especially during the 1980s and 1990s the elites of numerous cities have been scrutinised. By doing so, historians tried to understand (a) who enjoyed access to political power and why they managed to play a role in local politics, (b) how the urban political elites were socially interconnected and (c) how state formation and economic developments impacted on the composition of political elites.

Dutch scholars have invested heavily in this topic, yielding a picture of urban political elites that were closely knitted together by means of numerous marriage ties. For the Southern provinces knowledge on the social network formation between elite groups remains limited to some exploratory papers. The results for the Dutch result can't be transferred to the southern provinces, since the cities of the south were usually characterised by different social and political structures due to the inclusion of the craft guilds in local politics.

In this presentation I will analyse if, and if so, how the presence of the craft guilds in the magistracy had an impact on the way in which urban political elites were socially entangled. As was the case in

numerous cities in the southern part of the Low Countries, political power in Ghent was divided between two political groups, namely the patriciate (the poorterij) and the craft guilds. In the first part of my presentation, I will argue that both groups were characterised by a high degree of endogamy, meaning that patrician families married almost exclusively into their own ranks, while families embedded in the craft guilds preferred marrying into their own social group. In the second part of my presentation, I will argue that the different economic interests of the patriciate and craft guilds prevented them from intermarrying: while the patriciate invested massively in the countryside, the members of the craft guilds mainly focussed on the urban economy. My analysis illustrates that economic interests underpinned the forging of social networks.