



# Multilingualism, literacy, and wellbeing

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 – 10:00 – 12:00

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## Program

- 10:00 – 10:25 Ingvild Badhwar Valen-Sendstad: Health literacy as hopeful practice
- 10:25 - 10:50 Sari Pietikäinen: Assemblage, material literacy and knowledge design:  
new connections
- 10:50– 11:00 Break
- 11:00 - 11:25 Haley De Korne: “I Learned That My Name Is Spelled Wrong”: Lessons  
from Mexico and Nepal on Teaching Literacy for Indigenous  
Language Reclamation
- 11:25 - 11:50 Pia Lane: The materiality of minority language standardisation
- 11:50 - 12:00 Discussion

## Presenters and Abstracts

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**Ingvild Badhwar Valen-Sendstad**

*Doctoral Research Fellow, MultiLing, University of Oslo*

### **Title: Health literacy as hopeful practice**

In this talk, I trace one migrant jobseeker's lived experiences at the interface of health, integration, and (un)employment in the Norwegian labor market. The talk presents a small story analysis (Georgakopoulou, 2015) anchored in 'Yasmine's' ethnographic interviews. I discuss the relationship between health literacy as lived experience, *somatic health literacy*, and the social construct of *sociolinguistic employability*, that is the language practices that are deemed valuable in pursuit of sustainable employment. Specifically, I investigate how Yasmine's health literacy practices influence her language investments (Darvin & Norton, 2015) in a particular sociopragmatic style of Norwegian, and how she imagines this style to bolster her chances of obtaining sustainable employment. I illustrate how Yasmine generates wiggle room (Ahmed, 2014) in her stories to configure hopeful strategies in the face of health challenges and social inequalities. My study builds on novel conceptualizations in the sociolinguistic of hope (Silva & Lee, 2021) and contributes to underexplored aspects of health literacy as social practice.

### **References**

Ahmed, S. (2014, September 28). Wiggle Room. *Feministkilljoys*.

<https://feministkilljoys.com/2014/09/28/wiggle-room/>

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, 36–56. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000191>

Georgakopoulou, A. (2015). Small Stories Research: Methods – Analysis – Outreach. In A. De Fina & A. Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *Handbook of Narrative Analysis* (pp. 255–271). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-111845815X.html>

Silva, D. N., & Lee, J. W. (2021). "Marielle, presente": Metaleptic temporality and the enregisterment of hope in Rio de Janeiro. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 25(2), 179–197. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12450>

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## **Sari Pietikäinen**

*Professor of Discourse Studies, University of Jyväskylä*

### **Title: Assemblage, material literacy and knowledge design: new connections**

In this talk, I will discuss the capacity of speculative art pieces to produce knowledge based on deep ethnography on professional sports. Designing these art pieces can be seen as part of material literacy practices, resulting in an interactive art exhibition that invites the visitors to engage with the co-constructed knowledge about professional ice hockey as work. At the same time, the designs are assemblages (Deleuze ref, Pietikäinen 2021a, 2021b) bringing together the intertwined relationships of material, discursive, and affective aspects in hockey work. As an assemblage, knowledge designs open up to multiple interpretations. They do not produce a single essential or universal truth. Rather, they vibrate with the past, the present and future potentialities.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Pietikäinen, S. (2021). Powered by assemblage: Language for multiplicity. *International Journal of Sociology of Language*, 2021(267–268), 235– 240. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2020-0074>

Pietikäinen, S. (2021). Assemblage of art, discourse and ice hockey: Designing knowledge about work. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 2021; 00: 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josl.12470>

Art of Hockey virtual exhibition <https://www.artofhockey.fi/>

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## **Haley De Korne**

*Associate professor, MultiLing, University of Oslo*

### **Title: “I Learned That My Name Is Spelled Wrong”: Lessons from Mexico and Nepal on Teaching Literacy for Indigenous Language Reclamation**

Globally many minoritized communities are searching for ways to improve their status and to reclaim languages that have been marginalized by socioeconomic and political processes. These efforts often involve novel literacy practices. In this presentation, I draw on my ethnographic research in Mexico, with reference to comparative data from Nepal to ask, what are the opportunities and constraints of teaching writing in support of Indigenous language reclamation? Writing is simultaneously an attraction and a source of marginalization or discouragement for

learners in both settings. Promoting and teaching writing creates opportunities such as raising the status, visibility, and longevity of Indigenous language education initiatives. Challenges include struggles for legitimacy among teachers and learners and the emergence of new hierarchies among dialects. I discuss ways that language reclamation efforts can benefit from making the most of the material and social nature of writing while avoiding hard-line purism. I also reflect on the process of studying literacy practices through an ethnographic lens.

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**Pia Lane**

*Professor, MultiLing, University of Oslo*

**Title: The materiality of minority language standardisation**

Developing a written standard for a minority language has consequences for the status of the language and for how speakers relate to the new standard. Speakers do not always accept and identify with the standard or might feel that their way of speaking has been left out or feel that they cannot live up to the new codified standard (Gal 2006, Lane 2015). In this presentation, I draw on different methods in order to analyse these complex processes. I will investigate the standardisation of Kven (a minority language in Northern Norway), and I aim to show how different methodological approaches may compliment data from sociolinguistic interviews. The material outcomes of standardisation will be brought to the fore through an analysis of the recent standardisation of Kven, a minoritised language spoken in Northern Norway. I draw on my experiences as a new speaker of Kven and participation in Kven language planning (Lane 2017) and analyse the standardisation of Kven as chains of social actions (Scollon 2001; Norris 2004), suggesting that the material outcomes of standardisation may be understood as frozen actions (Norris 2004). By applying the concept of frozen action to language standardisation, standardisation processes are analysed as mediated actions and material results of social actions performed in the past. Taking this as a starting point, I wish to show how including material objects in our analysis may yield a deeper analysis of complex social processes, such as standardisation.