DEMENTIA AND MULTILINGUALISM

Closing conference of the research project Language and communication in multilingual speakers with dementia (MultiLing Dementia), funded by The Research Council of Norway (2017-2021)

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER 2020
Location: Niels Treschows hus, Blindern, 12th floor

Program

9.00 Welcome
9.10 Jan Svennevig: Overview of the results of the MultiLing Dementia project
9.50 Anne Marie Landmark & Pernille Hansen: Combining interactional and psycholinguistic approaches to language use by persons with dementia (PWDs)
10.30 Break
10.50 Bente A. Svendsen & Maarja Siiner: Discourses of dementia and aging immigrants with dementia in traditional Norwegian media
11.30 Charlotta Plejert: Multilingual interaction and dementia: What do we know? What might the future look like?
12.10 Lunch
12.50 Rune Nielsen: Assessment of dementia in multicultural populations
13.30 Ela Czapka: Barriers and facilitators to accessing and using dementia care by minority ethnic groups in Norway
14.10 Break
14.20 Iris M. Strangmann, Katarina Antolovic, Pernille Hansen, Hanne Gram Simonsen, Monica Norvik, Loraine Obler: The continuity of cognates: Approaches to empirically establishing form overlap in data from patients with dementia and aphasia.
15.00 Peter Wetterberg: What characterises the different types of primary progressive aphasia?
15.40 Break
15.50 Alison Wray: Effective communication in multilingual dementia care settings: two animated films
16.30 Ingeborg Ribu: Tracking sentence comprehension in speakers with and without dementia

Abstracts

9.10 Overview of the results of the MultiLing dementia project
Jan Svennevig (MultiLing, University of Oslo)
This talk will sum up the central findings of the project related to the topic of lexical retrieval in language testing and conversation. It will also review some studies on communicative challenges facing PWDs in their everyday life and how these are overcome in examples of successful collaboration between PWDs and their interlocutors.
9.50 Combining interactional and psycholinguistic approaches to language use by PWDs
Anne Marie Landmark & Pernille Hansen (MultiLing, University of Oslo)

The MultiLing dementia project aimed to combine psycholinguistic and interactional approaches to the study of multilingual speakers with dementia. In this talk, we will discuss some of the theoretical and methodological challenges and opportunities we encountered in this interdisciplinary endeavour, focusing on the test setting.

10. 50 Discourses of dementia and aging immigrants with dementia in traditional Norwegian media
Bente A. Svendsen (MultiLing, University of Oslo) & Maarja Siiner (Aarhus University)

A quantitative corpus assisted discourse analysis (CADS) of articles published in traditional Norwegian media in 1995-2015 was carried out to detect the central topics and representations of dementia disease and the central agents defining it. Within that dementia corpus, as well as having included the years up till today, a qualitative discourse analysis was carried out to reveal how (aging) immigrants were framed within the dementia discourse.

11.30 Multilingual interaction and dementia: What do we know? What might the future look like?
Charlotta Plejert (Linköping University)

In this talk, the present scientific state concerning multilingual encounters in memory clinics and older people’s care in the Nordic countries is summarized, with a specific focus on language and interaction. The session ends with a discussion of future prospects for improved management of multilingualism and cultural diversity in dementia care.

12.50 Assessment of dementia in multicultural populations
Rune Nielsen (Danish Dementia Research Center)

Assessment of dementia is a clinical discipline relying on effective communication between the patient and clinician. Objective assessment of cognitive dysfunction is key to a dementia diagnosis, but may be challenged by cultural, language and educational factors in multicultural patient populations. This talk will present main results from the European collaborative project: The European Cross-Cultural Neuropsychological Test Battery (CNTB) and their implications for clinical practice.

13.30 Barriers and facilitators to accessing and using dementia care by minority ethnic groups in Norway.
Elzbieta Czapka (Oslo Metropolitan University)

Due to several barriers in access to health care services, elderly migrants constitute a group that poses special challenges regarding dementia diagnosis and treatment. The presentation will focus on the main barriers and facilitators to using dementia services by minority ethnic groups in Norway.

14:20 The continuity of cognates: Approaches to empirically establishing form overlap in data from patients with dementia and aphasia.
Iris M. Strangmann¹, Katarina Antolovic², Pernille Hansen², Hanne Gram Simonsen², Monica Norvik², Loraine Obler¹ (CUNY Graduate Center¹ and MultiLing, University of Oslo²)

Although bilingual researchers are interested in cognates, there is no standard practice on how to measure them. Plus, most studies exploring cognates use a categorical as opposed to continuous
approach. This study contrasts three continuous measures of cognateness on data selected from discourse and naming tasks performed by English-Norwegian speakers with dementia and aphasia. We demonstrate empirically that cognate pairs can be ranked along a continuum and highlight two measures that may benefit researchers in stimulus-set development: naïve monolinguals’ translations and researchers’ intuitions. We note that the former measure of cognateness distinguishes the cognates of patients with dementia and those with aphasia.

15.00 What characterises the different types of primary progressive aphasia?

Peter Wetterberg (Oslo University Hospital)

The three main types of PPA (semantic, nonfluent/agrammatic, and logopenic), as well as the related concept progressive apraxia of speech, will be described in terms of neuropathology, symptomatology, test and imaging findings, with presentations of typical cases.

15.50 Effective communication in multilingual dementia care settings: two animated films

Alison Wray (Cardiff University)

The videos *Dementia communication across language boundaries: developing language awareness* and its Norwegian equivalent, *Demens og kommunikasjon på tvers av språk: utvikling av språklig bevissthet*, are 40-minute animated films intended to support dementia carers whose clients do not have the same first language as they do. This presentation will introduce the films and discuss some of the linguistic and ethical challenges encountered in producing them.

16.30 Tracking sentence comprehension in speakers with and without dementia

Ingeborg Ribu (MultiLing, University of Oslo)

By combining online (eye tracking) and offline (accuracy) methods when studying sentence comprehension, we see that persons with Alzheimer’s disease and primary progressive aphasia have more difficulties with comprehending complex and low-frequent sentence structures.