



Bilingualism Matters Edinburgh

Annual Event 2021

Friday 18th June 2021, 2pm to 4pm

PROGRAMME (DRAFT)

14:00 – 15:30		Talks followed by Q & A
	Expanding research horizons on the bilingual experience	Prof Antonella Sorace University of Edinburgh
	Gaelic and English language skills in primary school children in Gaelic Medium Education	Dr Vicky Chondrogianni University of Edinburgh
	Working in Partnership to Support Language Learning	Lisa Hanna Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT)
	Much Language Such Talk - the Podcast	Brittany Blankinship, Carine Abraham & Eva-Maria Schnelten University of Edinburgh
	Bilingualism Matters in a year of change	Dr Katarzyna Przybycien University of Edinburgh
15:30 – 16:00		Discussions
<i>Choose from two discussion sessions – see p4 for details</i>		
	Working in partnership with the new Bilingualism Matters	
	BM Edinburgh volunteer projects	

TALKS

Expanding research horizons on the bilingual experience

Variation in the bilingual experience has become a central focus in research worldwide. Antonella will give a brief overview of how current and planned research at BM Edinburgh explores the bilingual experience in a collaborative way across a range of research areas, in the context of wider developments.



Antonella Sorace is Professor of Developmental Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh. She is a world-leading authority and has published widely on bilingualism and language learning over the lifespan. She is also committed to disseminating the findings of research on bilingualism outside academia, founding Bilingualism Matters in September 2008 as a local research-based information service for parents and teachers. There are now around 30 branches of Bilingualism Matters around the world.

Gaelic and English language skills in primary school children in Gaelic Medium Education

Immersion education for minority language speakers, such as the case of Gaelic in Scotland, relies on the provision of equitable and inclusive services that can cater for children of all abilities. Vicky presents recent findings from a Bòrd na Gàidhlig funded research project on the Gaelic and English language skills of children attending the first years of Gaelic Medium Education. As well as reviewing factors that affect results in language assessments generally, she looks specifically at children with developmental language disorders.



Dr Vicky Chondrogianni is a Senior Lecturer in Bilingualism at the University of Edinburgh. She read Linguistics and Classics at the University of Athens before going on to receive a PhD in Second Language Acquisition from the University of Cambridge. She investigates the language abilities of bilingual children with typical language development and with language disorders. She is also affiliated faculty at the Graduate Center of City University of New York.

Working in Partnership to Support Language Learning

2020-21 was a year of incredible change, where partnership working came to the forefront for SCILT. Lisa describes the impact of these partnerships on our work to support language learning, and how we plan to build on these as we move forward.



Lisa Hanna joined SCILT as a Professional Development Officer in November 2019 and a year later became Depute Director. Lisa has worked as a national development officer in International Education (LTS/ES), and as a 1+2 development officer for Inverclyde Council. Lisa has spent most of her teaching career with Inverclyde Council. As an experienced principal teacher of Spanish and French, she has extensive knowledge of the Scottish secondary curriculum.

Much Language Such Talk - the Podcast

In October 2020, Bilingualism Matters Edinburgh volunteers launched a brand-new podcast called Much Language Such Talk, exploring multilingualism and what it means to know and use more than one language. In each fortnightly episode, they explore languages with special guests in a fun, conversational and accessible format. Join them to learn more about the idea behind the podcast, the aims, their wonderful guests, and highlights from the first season.



Brittany Blankinship, Carine Abraham & Eva-Maria Schnelten are all PhD students at the University of Edinburgh. Next to their studies, they are all active volunteer members of the BM Edinburgh branch. Their involvement with BM has inspired them to launch the podcast to make language-related information accessible and understandable for everyone. Read more about them on the [MLST website](#).

Bilingualism Matters in a year of change

The worldwide coronavirus pandemic has led to massive changes in many aspects of our working and personal lives. Kat will present how BM has adapted to the new normal both locally and internationally, with special focus on involvement in the UNESCO's Futures of Education Initiative. She will also introduce exciting new plans for the future of Bilingualism Matters as an organisation.



Dr Katarzyna Przybycien is Research and Outreach Coordinator for Bilingualism Matters at the University of Edinburgh and for the international Bilingualism Matters network. With experience in science communication, community work and a PhD on best practices in knowledge exchange, she is responsible for liaisons and finding links and opportunities between disciplines and people. Kat is raising a multilingual family including Polish, Spanish, German, English and Gaelic.

DISCUSSIONS

Working in partnership with the new Bilingualism Matters

As we look forward to Bilingualism Matters working in a new structure, we want to invite stakeholders to discuss future directions for working in partnership.

Join Antonella Sorace and Kat Przybycien to ask questions and give your input on possible future collaborations and directions.

BM Edinburgh volunteer projects

BM Edinburgh has a fantastic group of volunteers, mainly post-graduate students, who work on public engagement projects throughout the year. Join them to find out more and ask questions about the projects they have been working on this year.

- **Accent Positivity** – Dr Maria Dokovova leads this project aiming to raise awareness of people’s misconceptions and prejudices regarding different accents: combat accent discrimination. She has so far published two website articles [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Equitable Projects Evaluation Template** – Mariel Deluna leads this project, which is in early stages of development. It aims to create a project evaluation template that all BM Edinburgh volunteer project leaders can use to assess the equitability of their projects.
- **Multilingual Storytelling**- María García Basanta leads this project, which is in a pilot phase. They aim to create and publicly share educational and entertaining storytelling videos for children (3-8) in a variety of languages.
- **Refugee Group** – Eva-Maria Schnelten leads this group who have hosted events over the last five years in the Scottish Refugee Festival. This year, they release a special MLST podcast episode, interviewing University of Edinburgh rector Debora Kayembe about her work as a human rights lawyer, translator and activist, and her experiences arriving in the UK as a refugee. Read about their events over the years: [2021](#) [2020](#) [2019](#) [2018](#)
- **Much Language Such Talk** – the podcast team will also be available for further discussion and questions.