

The Dynamic Potential of the Heritage Speaker Lexicon

The heritage speaker lexicon has been a neglected area of research and is easily dismissed as simply "reduced" due to limited input. However, the lexicon of heritage speakers shows numerous features that point to underlying competences typical of L1 speakers rather than L2 learners. The data presented in this talk are based on work done within the research group Emerging Grammars in Contact Situations (DFG FOR 2537, <https://www.linguistik.hu-berlin.de/en/rueg>). Oral and written productions were elicited in formal and informal settings within the "Language Situations" set up (Wiese 2020) for monolingual, majority and heritage speakers. We will focus on the realization of complex verbs and collocational ties in the language of heritage speakers of German in the U.S. in comparison to monolingual and bilingual speakers living in Germany in order to determine which areas of lexico-grammatical knowledge most likely contribute to innovation and, eventually, systematic change.