

Das Institut für Germanistik, Professur für Linguistik des Deutschen/Medienlinguistik
und das europäische COST-Netzwerk „New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe“
laden ein zu einem öffentlichen Plenarvortrag:

Donnerstag, den 12. Mai 2016, 18.00 – 19.00 (s.t.)

ESA-West 221

Professor Aneta Pavlenko

Temple University, USA

Multilingualism and forensic linguistics

The most frequent question applied linguists get is what exactly we apply linguistics to. What is the relevance of our research for the ‘real world’ outside of academia? What difference, if any, can we make? In this talk, I will discuss ways in which linguists apply their skills to analysis of forensic data, with the focus on interactions between second language users and law enforcement. Even native speakers do not always understand the legal register and their own rights. The problems are even greater among the vulnerable populations, which include people with mental health problems, juveniles, and speakers with limited proficiency in the majority language. These speakers may be able to maintain an everyday conversation but do not have the necessary proficiency to understand legal terms, complex sentences or language spoken at fast conversational rates. They also may not be familiar with assumptions made in the legal system of the host country. Yet, like other vulnerable populations, they have the right to equal treatment, which in this case means access to a professional interpreter, with expertise in legal interpreting. Many jurisdictions guarantee this right in court but not necessarily in the process of police interrogation. To show what happens when the rights are not understood by suspects, I will draw on my own and others’ cases, including the Boston Marathon bombing case, where I testified as a forensic expert. I will also consider ways in which applied linguists can affect public policies in the area of language access and highlight one such attempt, the *Guidelines for communicating rights to non-native speakers of English in Australia, England and Wales, and the USA*, released in 2015 by the Communication of Rights Group.

Aneta Pavlenko, Ph.D., is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Temple University, Philadelphia. She emigrated from the Soviet Union in 1989 and after four months in a refugee settlement in Italy settled in the USA with the assistance of refugee services. She received her Ph.D. in Linguistics from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, where she also worked for five years for the Refugee Assistance Program. In 1998 she started working at Temple University. Her teaching and research interests include psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of multilingualism, with the focus on cognition and emotions. She has been President of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, 2014-2015, Chair of the 2014 AAAL conference in Portland and Winner of the 2009 TESOL Award for Distinguished Research and of the British Association for Applied Linguistics 2006 Best Book of the Year Award.

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<https://www.slm.uni-hamburg.de/forschung/tagungen/new-speakers-2016>

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