



TGIF: The NTU Linguist Chatroom

Join us!

**Friday, 13 November 2015, 2.30pm
@ HSS Conference Room (HSS-05-57)**

Arabic in Istanbul – a sociolinguistic chronicle of tourism, displacement, and abjection

In this talk, I will take you to Istanbul. But, this will not be your usual tour of Istanbul “where East meets West”. It will be a tour of an Istanbul in which East meets East...

For a few years now, Istanbul has been witnessing a growing language contact involving Arabic and Turkish. I discuss the dynamics of this on-going sociolinguistic and socio-demographic transformation by focusing on the current linguistic landscaping of a particular area in the vicinity of Taksim Square, where numerous examples of publicly visible written Arabic have lately become prominent on various establishments and walls due to the increased presence of Arab tourists, who voluntarily come and go, and Syrian refugees, who are there to stay.

I analyze an extensive photographic collection of the linguistic landscape of the studied quarter against a number of interviews conducted with Syrian refugees working in the area and ordinary Turks whose reactions and attitudes to this change have been elicited. A broader context is provided by clippings from the Turkish media on “Arabs in Turkey”. I highlight several literacy-as-social-practice issues and discuss ways in which Arabs inscribe their presence and identities in Istanbul, the discursive elaboration of this presence, and socio-cultural tensions which this increasing “Arabisation” of Istanbul entails.

Speaker



Ivan joined the LMS team in December 2013. He holds a BA in Oriental Philology from Belgrade University, MA in Sociology and Anthropology from the American University in Cairo, and DPhil in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford. Before coming to NTU, he had a two-year Andrew W. Mellon Early Career Development Fellowship in Arabic Sociolinguistics at the University of Oxford. It was jointly held at the Oriental Institute and Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics. Ivan translated four novels of the Turkish Nobel Prize laureate Orhan Pamuk from Turkish into Serbian. Last year he co-authored *Working with Written Discourse* (with Deborah Cameron, SAGE, 2014). His monograph *Literacies in Contemporary Egypt: everyday writing and political change* is scheduled to come out with Routledge in 2016.

The TGIF seminar series is organised by
the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, HSS

