



# TGIF: The NTU Linguist Chatroom

**Join us! Friday, 27 October 2017, 3.30pm  
@ HSS Conference Room (HSS-05-57)**

## **The rise and fall of macro-sociolinguistics: is there a future for macro-sociolinguistics?**

Twentieth century approaches that focus on society-level studies of language phenomena [macro-sociolinguistic] such as multilingualism, language maintenance, shift and endangerment have been 'criticized' and found wanting in the examination and interpretation of 'new' forms of multilingualism and language practices that have emerged in the context of global mobility. Such studies are seen as products of a structural-functional approach that is (severely) challenged when dealing with the linguistic complexities of a global environment (e.g., Blommaert 2010, Coupland 2013, Heller 2007). As a result the past few decades have witnessed a move away from macro-level studies to micro-level ones of the 'new' forms of multilingualism. Furthermore, structural-functional approaches have given way to critical ones reflecting post-modern ideas about language and language behaviour. In this presentation I examine to what extent these 'new' forms of multilingualism provide challenges for macro-sociolinguistic approaches and whether this spells the end of macro-sociolinguistic research on societal multilingualism.

### **References**

- Blommaert, J. 2010. *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge: CUP.  
Coupland, N. (ed.) 2013. *The handbook of language and globalization*. Oxford: Wiley.  
Heller, M. (ed.) 2007. *Bilingualism: a social approach*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

### **Speaker**



**Anne Pauwels** is Professor of Sociolinguistics at SOAS, University of London. Prior to arriving in the UK she worked for almost thirty years in Australian Universities in the capacity of Professor of Linguistics (Universities of New England, Wollongong and Western Australia) and of the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (Universities of Wollongong and Western Australia). During her time in Australia she was involved in many initiatives relating to language policy at federal, state and local level. She has been President of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia and Vice President of the Australian Linguistic Society. Her research areas include multilingualism especially in immigrant contexts, language maintenance and shift, language policies in higher education and the relationship between language and gender. She has published books in each of these areas with the latest contribution being *Language maintenance and shift* (2016, CUP). Currently she leads a project on Multilingual practices and attitudes towards multilingualism among university students. This investigation forms part of the Cross-language Dynamics project that is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK. She is also involved in a project that examines social, cultural and linguistic practices in refugee camps in France funded by the French agency for research (FNR).

