

Language policy and practices in the Global North and South: Challenges, opportunities and future directions

Date 28/04/2021

Time: 13:00 – 14:30 CET

Dr. Stuart S. Dunmore, University of Sussex / University of Edinburgh, UK

Sociolinguistic ethnography in the COVID-19 era: Exploring language and identity in Scotland, 'New Scotland' and New England

Abstract: This seminar will explore aspects of linguistic identity and language policy in Scotland, and among diaspora communities in Nova Scotia, Canada, and New England, USA. In eastern Nova Scotia, a Gaelic-speaking minority has now existed for 250 years, while the city of Boston, MA constitutes a major destination for ongoing, secondary migration from the province. Policymakers in Scotland and Nova Scotia often allude to the role that 'new' L2 speakers will play in ensuring the future maintenance of Scottish Gaelic on either side of the Atlantic. Second language teaching has subsequently been employed to create new cohorts of speakers, as intergenerational transmission continues to decline in traditionally Gaelic-dominant communities. Based on five years of ethnographic research in Scotland and Canada, this seminar will examine new speaker narratives concerning Gaelic ethnolinguistic identity with a view to better understanding future prospects for minority language maintenance. In particular, I will focus on challenges I have recently encountered in relation to a forthcoming, COVID-19 delayed Fulbright fellowship to Harvard University, which will assess networks of new speakers in Boston.



Stuart Dunmore is a Research Fellow in Sociolinguistics at the University of Sussex and also teaches at the University of Edinburgh. Stuart's research focuses on the sociolinguistics of minority language use, ideologies and cultural identities, with particular reference to Celtic language communities in the UK and North America. Stuart's British Academy postdoctoral fellowship assessed the role of 'new' speakers in language learning initiatives and policy interventions in Scotland and Nova Scotia, and his first book [*Language Revitalisation in Gaelic Scotland*](#) was published in 2019. Stuart's current research examines obstacles to the development of bilingual oracy and multiculturalism within the Gaelic-medium education sector in Scotland, and the Cornish context in the south-west of Great Britain.

Registration link:

<https://universiteitleiden.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5UqcOGrqT0uGdS01iSiu3Xo7Bj5J5NUXxU5>

(Please remember that a valid ZOOM account will be required for registration)



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