



Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages
語言學及現代語言系

Variation in the Outer Circle: Language Variation and Change Amid Transnational Dialect Contact in Singapore

Prof. Rebecca Lurie STARR
National University of Singapore

Date: February 22, 2022 (Tuesday)

Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)

***Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM**



Prior registration is required

The Zoom Meeting details will be provided on 21 February 2022



Abstract

Scholarship in language variation and change has investigated the mechanisms and outcomes of dialect contact in a number of settings around the world. In variationist work, contact-induced change is typically argued to stem primarily from prolonged interpersonal contact, rather than from short-term travel or media exposure, as regular interaction is thought to be necessary for the transmission of complex linguistic features. In research in the world Englishes and contact linguistics traditions, however, media exposure is often pointed to as a source of language change; moreover, the notion that speakers adopt new features as a result of short-term travel and media consumption is a commonly-circulating discourse in postcolonial societies. This talk considers the impact of three major sources of transnational dialect contact — institutional exonymativity, transnational mobility, and media consumption — on variation and change in the English and Mandarin spoken in Singapore, a multilingual nation in Southeast Asia. The issues and findings surveyed here underscore the utility of applying variationist approaches to world English-speaking communities and other postcolonial settings. Correspondingly, they illustrate how research in such settings may shed new light on basic assumptions in the field of language variation and change.

Speaker

Rebecca Lurie Starr is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore. She received her PhD in Linguistics with a Designation in Cognitive Science from Stanford University in 2012. Her research focuses on children's sociolinguistic development and language variation and change in multilingual settings.

All are Welcome

Enquiries

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, CUHK.
Tel: (852)3943 7911 Fax: (852)2603 7755 E-mail: lin@cuhk.edu.hk