

Summer school: Bilingual minds, bilingual machines

Cognition Institute, Plymouth University, 24th-28th June 2013

Final call for applications

The young human brain copes remarkably well with two or more languages, with early bilingualism often resulting in perfect parallel proficiency. In contrast, automatic translation and language recognition systems remain suboptimal, despite powerful computing resources, large-scale corpora and increasingly sophisticated training algorithms.

The summer school is a unique opportunity for postgraduate students and early-career researchers in psychology and computer science to engage over common issues informed by both disciplines. How can we model bilingual processing? How are two phonologies represented? How is meaning related to word forms? How far can meanings be shared between languages in the human mind and in machines?

The school will feature interactive lectures from world-leading researchers: psychologists investigating early and late bilingualism; cognitive scientists modelling the bilingual mental lexicon, from phonology to semantics; computer scientists and roboticists designing automated translators and language recognition/learning systems. Participants will also gain hands-on experience in computational modelling, cutting-edge robotic technology and advanced techniques of experimental psychology. They will also have the opportunity to submit an abstract for poster session that will take place during the week, with two selected for a 20-minute conference-style presentation.

The school is supported by EUCog (www.eucognition.org). Registration is open to a maximum of 30 participants (tinyurl.com/bilingualismsummerschool).

Confirmed speakers

Professor Tony Belpaeme, Plymouth University – developmental robotics

Professor Marc Brysbaert, Ghent University – adult bilingualism

Dr Bill Byrne, University of Cambridge – automatic translation

Professor Angelo Cangelosi, Plymouth University – developmental robotics

Professor Detmar Meurers, University of Tübingen – learner corpora and computational linguistics

Dr Katerina Pastra, Cognitive Systems Research Institute, Athens – embodied machine translation

Dr Patrick Rebuschat, Bangor University – bilingual cognition

Professor Majd Sakr, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar – bilingual robotics

Professor Nuria Sebastian-Galles, Universitat Pompeu Fabra – developmental bilingualism

Dr Yijiang Wu, University of Sheffield – developmental bilingualism

Application and registration

We are seeking applications from postgraduate students and early-career researchers (i.e., not more than three years post-PhD). Registration fees for the week are £400, which includes accommodation, breakfasts, lunches, refreshments and a full social programme. To register your interest, please submit the following documents in PDF format.

- Curriculum vitae (up to two pages), indicating level of English language attainment.
- Description of research interests and potential benefits of participation (one page).

Please submit your application by 26th April 2013. Selected applicants will be notified of acceptance on 3rd May. Applications should be emailed to:
bilingualismsummerschool@gmail.com.

There is no need to reapply if you have previously done so.

Organising committee

Allegra Cattani, School of Social Science and Social Work, Plymouth University

Caroline Floccia, School of Psychology, Plymouth University

Laurence White, School of Psychology, Plymouth University