

Preface

**Jan Heegård Petersen, Karoline Kühl,
Janne Bondi Johannessen, and Michael T. Putnam**

The Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas (WILA) started in 2010 when Janne Bondi Johannessen (University of Oslo, Norway) contacted Joseph Salmons (University of Wisconsin-Madison) regarding the possibility of initiating a workshop focused on issues connected with heritage and immigrant languages spoken in the Americas. Johannessen had received funding from the Norwegian Research Council for her existing cross-Scandinavian dialect project to financially support a seminar in the USA, which would hopefully become the basis for bilateral cooperation on related topics. Salmons responded enthusiastically, and WILA soon became an annual forum for those researchers interested in the development of immigrant minority languages in North and South America, with research groups from many parts of the world, though with a majority from Europe and the Americas. The WILA workshops have been organized every second year on each continent (i.e., Europe and North America): University of Wisconsin–Madison, University of Oslo, Penn State University, University of Iceland, University of California–LA, University of Uppsala, University of Georgia–Athens, and University of Copenhagen.

The WILAs of previous years have led to several edited volumes, namely Johannessen & Salmons (2012), Johannessen & Salmons (2015), Page & Putnam (2015), Brown & Bousquette (2018) and Bousquette & Brown (forthc., 2018). The contributions in these volumes cover a broad range of topics within the fields of general linguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, bilingualism and language contact, historical linguistics, and language documentation which are relevant for immigrant and heritage languages and their speakers.

This volume represents the first of the newly established series *Selected Proceedings of the Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas*. The papers collected in this current volume were first presented at the WILA 8, held at the University of Copenhagen in October 2017, organized by the research project *Danish Voices in the Americas* and generously funded by the *A.P. Møller og Hustru Chastine McKinney Møllers Fond til almene Formaal* and the Carlsberg Foundation. This publication has been funded by the *Department for Nordic Studies and Linguistics* at the University of Copenhagen. We, the series and volume editors, would like to express our thanks for this generous support.

The papers in this first volume of WILA proceedings all address North and West Germanic languages in – with one exception – North America, but they address a variety of different linguistic features and macro-sociolinguistic parameters: The papers by Stolberg and Hoffman & Kytö focus on the steps and mechanisms in language shift as represented in written documents, pinpointing that the process of language shift from the minority language is neither straight nor unidirectional. Stolberg analyses the language choice between German and English in a selection of family papers of a central member of the Breithaupt family in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Hoffman & Kytö analyze the processes of language shift between Swedish and English in four congregations in the American Midwest, contrasting the official sphere (church documents) with the domestic sphere (cookbooks produced for fundraising by the female members of the congregations).

The remainder of contributions in this volume is based on the empirical analysis of spoken varieties of the Germanic family. Jóhannsdóttir focuses on the representations of time transitions in North American Icelandic narratives, pointing out both divergence from Icelandic Icelandic and convergence towards English. The papers by Rødvand, van Baal, and Lykke all focus on North American Norwegian. Rødvand's analysis of grammatical gender identifies patterns in gender marking

despite considerable interspeaker variation. Lykke's paper explores the possible connection between verbal finiteness morphology and the maintenance of V2-word order, finding no evidence for such a link. Van Baal studies compositional definiteness based on results from a translation experiment, linking her results to cross-linguistic hypercorrection rather than transfer from English.

Moving further south, Heegård Petersen and Kühl present analyses of Danish spoken in Argentina and North America, respectively. Heegård Petersen investigates the (over)use of the approximative phrase *mere eller mindre* 'more or less' in Argentine Danish by contrasting its usage in Argentine Danish with modern spoken Danish and Danish dialects. Kühl explores auxiliary choice in three verb phrases in North American Danish from a Construction Grammar approach, arguing that analogical leveling of North American Danish with English leads to constructional change in form and function as well as in frequency and prototype. Still with regard to Danish, Peterson's paper addresses the connection between food and language maintenance in a Mormon community of Sanpete County, Utah, with roots in the emigration from Denmark before the turn of the previous century.

Returning to varieties of heritage German, both Hoffman & Klosinski and Auer & Derungs focus on phonological aspects of Swiss German language islands in the USA. Hoffman & Klosinski investigate if and how the phonological singleton-geminate distinction in the small Swiss German language island in Kidron, Ohio, has changed due to the prolonged contact with English, identifying both stability in the phonological distinction, but change in the phonetic realization. Auer & Derungs compare several morphological, lexical, and phonological dialect features in recordings from the Swiss German town New Glarus, Wisconsin, with their counterparts in the homeland dialect, pinpointing the influence of both English, other Swiss German dialects and schooling in Standard German in the diaspora on the development of New Glarus Swiss German. Finally, Bousquette presents an analysis of preposition stranding in Wisconsin Heritage German, concluding that the speakers show a high degree of syntactical stability (i.e. non-change compared to homeland data) and a preference for structures that are shared by English and German.

The *Selected Proceedings of the Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas* has been established with the aim to provide comparatively quick publication for smaller studies and to document ongoing work in the field of heritage linguistics. We are encouraged that this workshop and the proceedings connected with this workshop will continue to document the advancement of the workshop and the field of heritage linguistics for the next many years.

Copenhagen, Oslo and Pennsylvania, August 2018

Jan Heegård Petersen and Karoline Kühl (University of Copenhagen), volume editors

Janne Bondi Johannessen (University of Oslo) and Michael T. Putnam (Penn State University), series editors

References

- Bousquette, Joshua & Joshua R. Brown (eds.). 2018. Heritage and Immigrant Languages in the Americas: Formal Linguistic Approaches. Special issue. *Journal of Language Contact* 11(3).
- Brown, Joshua R. & Joshua Bousquette (eds.). 2018. Heritage and Immigrant Languages in the Americas: Sociolinguistic Approaches. Special issue. *Journal of Language Contact* 11(2).
- Johannessen, Janne Bondi & Joseph C. Salmons (eds.). 2012. Norsk i Amerika. Special issue. *Norsk lingvistisk tidsskrift*, 30. Oslo: Det Norske Vitenskaps-Akademi.
- Johannessen, Janne Bondi & Joseph C. Salmons (eds.). 2015. *Germanic heritage languages in North America. Acquisition, attrition and change*. Studies in language variation, 18. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Page, Richard B. & Michael T. Putnam (eds.). 2015. *Moribund Germanic heritage languages in North America. Theoretical perspectives and empirical findings*. Empirical approaches to linguistic theory, 8. Boston: Brill.

Selected Proceedings of the 8th Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas (WILA 8)

edited by Jan Heegård Petersen
and Karoline Kühl

Cascadilla Proceedings Project Somerville, MA 2018

Copyright information

Selected Proceedings of the 8th Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas (WILA 8)
© 2018 Cascadilla Proceedings Project, Somerville, MA. All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-57473-473-7 library binding

A copyright notice for each paper is located at the bottom of the first page of the paper.
Reprints for course packs can be authorized by Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

Ordering information

Orders for the library binding edition are handled by Cascadilla Press.
To place an order, go to www.lingref.com or contact:

Cascadilla Press, P.O. Box 440355, Somerville, MA 02144, USA
phone: 1-617-776-2370, fax: 1-617-776-2271, sales@cascadilla.com

Web access and citation information

This entire proceedings can also be viewed on the web at www.lingref.com. Each paper has a unique document # which can be added to citations to facilitate access. The document # should not replace the full citation.

This paper can be cited as:

Heegård Petersen, Jan, Karoline Kühl, Janne Bondi Johannessen, and Michael T. Putnam. 2018. Preface.
In *Selected Proceedings of the 8th Workshop on Immigrant Languages in the Americas (WILA 8)*, ed. Jan Heegård Petersen and Karoline Kühl, v-vi. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #3424.