TGIF:
The NTU Linguist Chatroom

Using English in Irish Literature

Code-mixing in spontaneous speech has been widely studied. However, research into contemporary literary forms of language remains limited. In this talk, I will present a sociolinguistic analysis of the presence of English in Irish-language literature and align my findings with recent research into spoken code-mixing. This preliminary research seeks to provide a linguistic analysis of code-mixing in Irish-language literature by examining texts from two genres: popular fiction and literature for the adult learner.

This paper will show how universal functions identified in spoken code-mixing appear in literary form in Irish texts. While code-mixing in print literature – a nonspontaneous, monomodal form of language – differs greatly to spoken interactions, universal functions are present in both. Drawing on literature allows for the Irish language to be examined in a wider sociolinguistic situation. My analysis will convey how authors envision what their language is, how texts are situated in the Irish language landscape, and how the texts represent the Irish-language community.

Speakers

Dr Barlow received her PhD in Sociolinguistics from the University of Limerick. Before coming to Singapore, Dr Barlow worked with the Carmichael Watson Project based in the Centre for Research Collections at the University of Edinburgh (the collection has since been added to the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme due to its invaluable contribution to Gaelic folklore, language, and history). Her research interests include bilingualism and sociolinguistics as well as Celtic languages, literature, and folklore. She has been teaching at NTU since 2015.