Sociolinguistic Symposium 19, August 22-24, 2012, FU Berlin
Thematic Panel Proposal

Panel Title: **Superdiversity and digital literacy practices**
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This panel will seek to articulate aspects of the relationship between superdiversity and digital literacy practices. The concept of superdiversity, defined by Vertovec (Vertovec 2007) as "a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything previously experienced in a particular society", is premised on a world-wide shift in migration patterns from relatively predictable collective flows of migration to more diffuse and less predictable individual flows since the 1990s. It is attracting increasing interest in terms of its sociolinguistic implications (e.g. Blommaert & Rampton 2011). This panel aims to complement and expand this discussion by focusing on the role of digital media – a term used here as a cover term for any mode or format of text-based digital mediation, ranging from email and texting to social network sites and discussion forums – in the process of superdiversity. While it seems intuitively obvious that digitally-mediated communication must in one way or another be implicated in the socio-cultural processes of mobility and flow that are subsumed under superdiversity, systematic investigation of these relationships is currently lacking. Drawing on a number of case studies on digital literacy practices by diverse groups and different urban environments, the contributions to this panel will seek to articulate these relationships. With the notion of digital literacy practices, we index an approach that does not focus on the mere linguistic variability found in computer-mediated discourse, but on linguistic practices carried out by translocally networked people via digital media.

More specifically, the contributions to the panel will pursue one or more of the following aims: *a*) pinpoint how digital literacy practices may play into and contribute to sustaining communication flows in processes of transnational mobility, diasporic connectivity and/or engagement in global popular culture; *b*) consider how variables relevant to the superdiversity concept, such as country of origin and migration channel, interact with digital literacy practices in particular cases; *c*) explore the implications of digital communication practices for the sociolinguistic repertoires and the orders of indexicality (Blommaert & Backus 2011) that emerge or gain currency in the context of particular processes of mobility and flow; and *d*) assess digital linguistic practices in superdiversity contexts with regard to their fit to old and new concepts for linguistic diversity, including multi-, poly- and metrolingualism.

We anticipate contributions will cover ground with some previous research, such as linguistic practices on immigrant discussion boards (see e.g. Androutsopoulos 2006; Li & Juffermans 2011) as well as explore processes less understood such as e.g. the use of digital media in transnational migration trajectories, with urban space figuring as a common denominator of the different case studies.

We anticipate around 3-5 papers, plus introduction and commentary.

Message to the Program Committee and Chairs: Please note that, if accepted, this panel will be part of a 'superdiversity stream' in the conference with at least three panels, which should not be programmed in competition with each other.

References

Androutsopoulos, Jannis (2006). Multilingualism, diaspora, and the Internet: Codes and identities on German-based diaspora websites. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 10, 520-547.

Blommaert, Jan and Backus, Ad (2011). Repertoires revisited: 'knowing language' in superdiversity. *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies* 67, available at www.kcl.ac.uk/ldc.

Blommaert, Jan and Rampton, Ben (2011). Language and superdiversity: A position paper. *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies* 70, available at www.kcl.ac.uk/ldc.

Li, Jinling and Juffermans, Kasper (2011). Multilingual Europe 2.0: Dutch-Chinese youth identities in the era of superdiversity. *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies* 71, available at www.kcl.ac.uk/ldc.

Vertovec, Steven (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, 1024-1054.