



GUEST LECTURE

Elizabeth Lanza
University of Oslo

FAMILY MULTILINGUALISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Wednesday, 26th April 2023
16.15 - 17.45, F - 123
University of Bern

With increased transnational migration in recent years, especially as experienced in Europe, raising children with more than one language has become more and more common as people cross borders, integrate into new cultural-linguistic landscapes, form intermarriages and partnerships, and establish multilingual families. Home language maintenance and language development in these multilingual families have become highly complex, given the social, cultural and linguistic changes brought about by contemporary globalization with new communication technologies and changes in the political and economic landscape. The family as a context for the child's learning of language(s) has been addressed from various epistemological stances. Developmental psycholinguistics has held a long tradition in studying children's language development in the home with a more recent focus on input and experience. On the other hand, sociolinguistics has increasingly turned its attention to children's language learning in the home through the burgeoning field of family language policy, which draws on theoretical frameworks of language policy, language socialization, literacy studies, and child language acquisition. The field of family language policy has evolved from its earlier emphasis on the question of what (socio)linguistic environments are conducive to the learning of two or more languages in the family to more critical perspectives on family, identity and ideology, and the impact this has on the child's language development and use and, more generally, on the family and family language practices. In my talk I will present and discuss new directions in the study of multilingual families, as demonstrated in the evolving field of family language policy. This includes a critical perspective on the notion of 'family' and, with a focus on Norway, on how families with a migrant background navigate public and private discourses on the transnational family

Elizabeth Lanza is Professor Emerita of Linguistics and former Director of the Centre for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan (MuzltiLing) at the University of Oslo – a Centre of Excellence financed by the Research Council of Norway. She is also an elected member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. Lanza has published widely on multilingualism, addressing issues of language socialization, family language policies and practices, migrant narratives, language ideology, language policy, linguistic landscape, and research methodology.