



### Talk Series: Diversity in Linguistics

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*Co-activation of bilinguals' non-target language during L2 processing in  
Russian-German bilinguals*

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It is a well-known fact that both languages of bilinguals are activated even if the current situation requires only one of them. But can the non-target language accelerate or slow down the processing of the relevant language and if so, to what extent? The research on the co-activation of L1 in bilinguals is relatively scarce and focuses only on a few language pairs, e.g., English and Dutch or Spanish and Catalan. Slavic languages have not yet been investigated on a large scale. To bridge this gap, I am working with Russian-German bilinguals. The existing studies on this language pair are limited and inconclusive. Furthermore, previous studies were run mostly with L2 learners who acquired their L2 in adulthood. These bilinguals may differ from bilingual heritage speakers who grew up with two languages simultaneously. In order to investigate the possibly different L1 activation patterns, I invited two bilingual groups: L1 speakers of Russian who acquired German in adulthood and Russian-German heritage speakers. The participants were presented with two overlapping images: either two objects or an object and written (German) word. They were asked to name one of the objects in German and ignore the other object/word. The images contained pairs with overlapping onsets in either German (**Gurke** – **Geschenk**) or German and Russian (**Kerze** – **Kniga** 'book') and pairs without any overlap. I expect the participants to name images with the onset overlap faster than in the control condition. I expect this effect to be larger in L2 learners of German since their competence in Russian is higher and the activation of Russian is stronger than in heritage speakers. The results will help us to understand the interplay of two languages in bilinguals' minds and could be extended to other combinations with Slavic languages such as Ukrainian-German or Croatian-German.