

Linguistics Departmental Seminar Series

Determining the origin of asylum claimants through language analysis: The case of Arabic

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3:30 – 5:00 PM

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Abstract

Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO) is used by some governments, including that of the UK, to assist in decisions on claimants' status as refugees. In the current geopolitical context, with huge numbers of refugees from the Middle East now seeking asylum in Europe, it is clear that there will be a commensurate amount of Arabic-based LADO activity for the foreseeable future. As such, there is urgent need to build on the limited existing scholarly work on LADO in the Arabic context (Detailleur 2010, Rosenhouse 2010, 2012), in order to better understand the realities of how Arabic-based LADO is currently being conducted, and to move towards a consensus on standards of best practice in this area. This presentation examines the role of Arabic dialectologists in the conduct of LADO, and outlines a methodology for producing evidence for or against the veracity of an Arabic-speaking individual's claimed place of origin.