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Public Lecture Series Spring 2017
Crossing Borders – and Then?
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Thursday, 27 April 2017
Semantic Contact: Migrants Encountering the Representations of Host Communities
Dr Alex Gillespie, Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, London School of Economics

10:00 – 12:00 h
University of Neuchatel, Espace Louis-Agassiz 1, Room RS38

Abstract
Migration and mobility research is often focused on the physical movement of bodies, and the points of contact when people of different groups or nationalities meet. But, migration necessarily entails a movement and meeting of ideas. How do the ideas that migrants bring with them interact with the ideas that they encounter? The lecture will introduce Dialogical Analysis, as a methodology that enables the detailed tracing of "semantic encounters" and its consequences. Using data from a range of studies, the lecture will explore how migrants talk about the ideas they encounter, specifically the perspectives

that they attribute to their host communities. Group discussion data, in which migrants tell stories about host communities, is analyzed to reveal how host ideas and perspectives are interacted with – dismissed, acknowledged, argued with, laughed at, or embraced. The lecture will trace how geographical movements, and objective encounters, become semantic encounters, as experiences, narratives and voices reverberate in the discourse of migrants.

Curriculum Vitae

Dr Alex Gillespie is Deputy Head of the Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Editor of the Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, and a Director of LSE Enterprise. His research focuses on communication, divergences of perspective, misunderstandings, trust and listening. He is particularly interested in what people can learn from listening to each other and why people often fail to understand, or actively ignore, points of view that are different or challenging.

Selected Publications

– Aveling, E. L., Gillespie, A., & Cornish, F. (2015). "A Qualitative Method for Analysing Multivoicedness." *Qualitative Research* 15(6): 670–687.
– Gillespie, A., & Cornish, F. (2014). "Sensitizing Questions: A Method to Facilitate Analyzing the Meaning of an Utterance." *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 48(4): 435–452.
– Kadianaki, I., & Gillespie, A. (2015). "Alterity and the Transformation of Social Representations: A Sociocultural Account." *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 49(1): 73–88.
– Gillespie, A. & Zittoun, T. (2013). "Meaning Making in Motion: Bodies and Minds Moving Through Institutional and Semiotic Structures." *Culture & Psychology* 19: 518–532.
– Gillespie, A., Kadianaki, I. & O'Sullivan-Lago, R. (2012). "Encountering Alterity: Geographic and Semantic Movements." In *Oxford Handbook of Culture and Psychology*, edited by J. Valsiner. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
– Gillespie, A., Howarth, C., & Cornish, F. (2012). "Four Problems for Researchers Using Social Categories." *Culture & Psychology* 18: 391–402.
– Gillespie, A. (2008). "Social Representations, Alternative Representations and Semantic Barriers." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 38: 376–391.
– Aveling, E-L. & Gillespie, A. (2008). "Negotiating Multiplicity: Adaptive Asymmetries within Second Generation Turks' 'Society of Mind'." *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* 21: 200–222.