



# Book of abstracts

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## Program

Informal meetings can take place during coffee break and lunch on **wonder.me** with the following link: <https://www.wonder.me/r?id=ccbfbde4-35c6-43c9-8ff5-9e8a16dddf3b>

Keynote lectures, panels, workshops and poster sessions will be held in Zoom. Keynote presentations will take place in the main conference room. Each panel, workshop, and poster session will have its own breakout room with the name of the respective slot (e.g., Panel 4, Workshop 1). All relevant links and passwords will be provided via email on August 25.

### Monday, August 30, 2021 – Day 1

8.45 – 9.15	Digital Check-in		
9.15 – 9.30	<b>Welcoming address:</b> Prof. Agnès Fritze (Director School for Social Work FHNW) Anne Parpan-Blaser, Simone Girard, Annette Lichtenauer, Gabriela Antener (Organizing Committee)		
9.40 – 10.30	<b>Keynote 1</b> <b>Deborah Chinn</b> (Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Palliative Care, King's College London) <b>Easy Read health information and the British context for the dissemination of Easy Read texts</b>		
10.30 – 10.50	Coffee break		
10.50 – 11.50	<b>Panel 1</b> <b>Rocio Bernabé Caro/Anna Matamala/Sergio Hernández Garrido:</b> Audiovisual content for all: Easy-to-read Language in Audiovisual Translation  <b>Anna Wendorff:</b> Simple and easy-to-read and understand language for the audio description of art		<b>Panel 2</b> <b>Christiane Maaß /Silvia Hansen-Schirra:</b> Easy Language, Plain Language, Easy Language Plus: Perspectives on Comprehensibility and Stigmatisation  <b>Cathy Basterfield:</b> What's in a Name? Easy English, Easy Read, Accessible Communication: The journey forward
12.00 – 13.30		<b>Panel 3</b> <b>Elisa Casalegno:</b> A Comparison between Easy-to-Read Guidelines in French and Swiss Pedagogical Recommendations for Students with Special Educational Needs	<b>Panel 4</b> <b>Leelaura Leskelä/Camilla Lindholm:</b> Everyone has a right to communicate – but what does that mean in linguistically asymmetrical conversations?



		<p><b>Péter László Horvath/Lili Ladányi:</b> Development of Curriculum (DACUM) of special educators using Easy Language</p> <p><b>Mohammed Alnabulsi:</b> Easy Read in Arab world</p>	<p><b>Emmanuelle Canut/Juliette Delahaie/Magali Husianycia/Julia Fuchs:</b> Linguistic criteria for “Easy Language” in French (FALC): an experiment with a migrant public</p> <p><b>Ella Airaksinen:</b> How to address the reader in easy Finnish text? Improving the Easy-to-Read Finnish Meter’s “interaction between the reader and the writer” criterion</p>
<b>13.30 – 14.30</b>	Lunch break		
<b>14.30 – 16.00</b>	<p><b>Workshop 1</b> <b>Leealaura Leskelä/Silvia Hansen-Schirra/Silke Gutermuth:</b> Evaluating Easy and Plain Languages</p>	<p><b>Panel 5</b> <b>Luisa Carrer/Andrea Sterchi:</b> A survey on Easy Language in Switzerland: Service providers’ perspectives</p> <p><b>Julia Fuchs/Emmanuelle Canut/Juliette Delahaie/Magali Husianycia:</b> Easy Language research beyond national boundaries. Comparing German “Leichte Sprache” and French “FALC”</p> <p><b>Floriana Carlotta Sciumbata:</b> New Linguistic Guidelines to Write Easy-to-Read Information in Italian</p>	<p><b>Panel 6</b> <b>Chiara Fioravanti/Francesco Romano:</b> Easy-to-read for migrant inclusion: creating a glossary on public administration terminology</p> <p><b>Ulla Vanhatalo/Camilla Lindholm:</b> Rephrasing PRIME-MD PHQ2 Question Depression Screen in Easy and Translatable Language</p> <p><b>Paolo Canavese/Annarita Felici/Cornelia Griebel:</b> Institutional Communication in Plain and Easy-to-Read Language: A Case Study at the Swiss Federal Statistical Office</p>
<b>16.10 – 17.00</b>	<p><b>Keynote 2</b> <b>Saskia Schuppener/Anne Goldbach</b> (Professor of Pedagogy for Intellectual Disabilities at the Leipzig University/ Research associate at the Leipzig University) <b>Participation and accessibility through Easy-to-Read? Theory and research-based reflection on the risks and side effects of a practical concept</b></p>		
<b>17.10 – 17.30</b>	Handbook of Easy Languages in Europe (Ulla Vanhatalo/Camilla Lindholm)		



**Tuesday, August 31, 2021 – Day 2**

8.30-8.50	Check-in		
8.50 – 9.00	Welcome words		
9.05 – 10.05		<p><b>Panel 7</b> <b>Cathy Basterfield:</b> Images everywhere: let’s talk about them</p> <p><b>Leo Rutschmann/Sarah Ebling/Martin Volk:</b> Image-Text Alignment for Simplified-Language Corpora and Text Generation</p>	<p><b>Panel 8</b> <b>Idastiina Valtasalmi:</b> Word association test for adults with intellectual disabilities</p> <p><b>Hanga Hegedüs:</b> Examination of the receptive language abilities of 1-8. primary school students with intellectual disabilities with TROG-H test</p>
10.10 – 11.00	<p><b>Keynote 3</b> <b>Tatjana Knapp</b> (director of Risa Institute - Centre for general, functional and cultural literacy and president of LABRA - Slovenian association for adapted communications) <b>Current research from Slovenija and the development of EtR in Eastern Europe</b></p>		
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break		
11.30 – 13.00	<p><b>Workshop 2</b> <b>Ulla Bohman:</b> The 4 Components of Easy-to- Read</p>	<p><b>Panel 9</b> <b>Sarah Jablotschkin/Heike Zinsmeister:</b> How simple wording can increase complexity – An analysis of “sein” in Simplified German</p> <p><b>Agnieszka Przybyla-Wilkin:</b> Syntax of easy- to-read in Polish: conclusions from research on subjects with Down syndrome</p>	<p><b>Panel 10</b> <b>Bronwyn Newman/Karen Fisher/Julian Trollor:</b> Using easy read information in Australian mental health services</p> <p><b>Valentina Crestani:</b> “Living” with(out) Architectural and Linguistic Barriers: German and Italian Easy-to-read Language</p>
13.00 – 14.15	Lunch Break		
14.15 – 15.15	<p><b>Postersession 1</b></p> <p><b>Soilimaria Korhonen:</b> Easy Language in Social and Health Care Studies - A case Study of Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Eastern Finland</p> <p><b>Carina Frondén/Solveig Arle:</b> Easy Swedish and readability</p>	<p><b>Postersession 2</b></p> <p><b>Dominik Pfütze/Sarah Ebling:</b> Sentence Alignment in the Context of Automatic Text Simplification</p> <p><b>Ina Steinmetz/Karin Harbusch:</b> A writing-support system utilizing ‘Leichte Sprache’ (LS; easy-to-read German) for people with low literacy skills</p>	



	<p><b>Sarah Guidi/Christa Notter/Sandra Weilenmann:</b> «Plain Swiss German Sign Language» («Plain DSGS»)</p>	<p><b>Péter László Horvath/Beáta Német:</b> How does the original and easy-to-understand recipe help in the process of learning how to make an instant soup?</p>
14.45-15.15	<p><b>History walk</b> <b>Ulla Bohman:</b> The long and winding road – a short walk through the history of Easy Language</p>	
15.15 – 15.30	Coffee break	
15.30 – 16.20	<p><b>Keynote 4</b> <b>Walburga Fröhlich</b> (managing director atempo, Graz) <b>Digitisation and Easy Language</b></p>	
16.30 – 16.45	Closing Session	



## Keynote speakers and abstracts



**Author: Debora Chinn**

**Institution: King's College London and South West London and St George's NHS Mental Health Foundation Trust**

**30 August, 9h40 – 10h30, Zoom Main Conference Room**

**Title:**

**Easy Read texts and people with intellectual disabilities: the social and interactional contexts of development and use**

**Abstract**

This presentation departs from the usual focus in scholarship on Easy Read (ER) on linguistic features of texts that make them more or less 'easy' to read. I also suggest an alternative model of literacy to unspoken assumptions underpinning much ER research, that implicitly characterizes literacy as individual level cognitive skills that individuals have or lack, proposing instead an understanding of literacy as a set of socially conditioned practices. Using findings from my own and others' research on UK Easy Read health texts for people with intellectual disabilities, I reference sociologically informed approaches drawn from the sociology of technology, New Literacy Studies and ethnomethodology to understand the social and interactional forces that shape actions at the three key sites where we can examine these Easy Read texts: the site of text production and design, the site of the text itself and the site of text reception.

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Deborah Chinn is a clinical psychologist who works in an NHS community team providing support to people with intellectual disabilities (ID). Her research has focused on inequalities and barriers to accessing health and social care experienced by people with ID, most recently with an emphasis on how mundane communicative practices can enact these barriers, and how we can promote communication that advances the autonomy and wellbeing of people with ID.



**Author: Walburga Fröhlich**  
**Institution: atempo Graz**

**31 August, 15h30 – 16h20, Zoom Main Conference Room**

**Title:**

**Digitization and simple language**

**Abstract**

What does digitisation mean and how can digitisation improve the quality of Easy Language and increase its impact? First, I will present different stages of a digitisation process in general and subsequently show how different stages in a digitisation process increase the participation of people and the possibilities for individual use of services.

Then we will direct the gaze towards practical examples of digitisation in the field of Easy Language. These examples represent different stages of digitisation and thus help us to understand the wide range of this term in practice.

We will analyse: What are the advantages of digitisation of Easy Language and how can people with disabilities or learning difficulties benefit from it? Could digitisation help us to reach more people with the need for easily understandable information? Will digitisation change our style of communication and information in general, and what could be the consequences of this change for Easy Language? But we will also discuss barriers to digitisation and through digitisation in the field of Easy Language and how they could be overcome.

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Walburga Fröhlich is dedicated to ideas and projects that contribute to a self-determined lifestyle of disabled people in the midst of our society. After 10 years of professional experience in the development and management of various projects in the field of disability and adult education, she founded the social enterprise "atempo" together with Klaus Candussi in 2000. In Austria, atempo is regarded as one of the leading players in the field of inclusion and equality of people with disabilities. Walburga Fröhlich is Ashoka Fellow, board member of the "Social Economy Styria. For people with disabilities" and 1st Chairwoman of the "Social Entrepreneurship Network Austria SENA".



**Author: Tatjana Knapp**

**Institution: Faculty of Social Work University of Ljubljana**

**31 August, 10h10 – 11h00, Zoom Main Conference Room**

**Title:**

**Current research on Easy-to-Read from Slovenia and developments in Eastern Europe**

**Abstract**

This keynote presents current growing research and practice in the field of Easy-to-read (EtR) in Slovenia, with emphasis on end-user involvement and language comprehension research that led to four EtR levels in Slovenian language.

I will also present how Easy-to-read is done in chosen Eastern European countries. Slovenia is geographically and culturally a Central European country. But, since it used to be a socialist country, it can also be seen as a part of Eastern Europe. Thus, six post-socialist countries, which have been undergoing similar transition since the late 1980's, are studied exploring basic similarities and differences in pace and scope of the EtR development: Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. What do these countries have in common when it comes to Easy-to-read? What is done differently? How did the Easy-to-read develop in each country? Where are we now? And what challenges do we face?

In the end, attention will also be paid to possible mutual gains from language specific EtR research findings in West (Czech, Slovak, Polish) and South Slavic (Slovenian, Croatian) languages.

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Tatjana Knapp has started volunteering in social work at a young age. Upon finishing university studies in cultural anthropology and entering a specialized program for future art therapists, she got a job in an institution for people with intellectual disabilities. In late 2017, she left to manage RISA, an NGO established to enable independent and user involved research and development of Easy-to-read, aiming to give voice to the people who are most often silent or overheard. In 2020, Knapp is closing a chapter by completing PhD thesis on engendered autonomy of women with intellectual disabilities in care institutions.





**Authors: Saskia Schuppener & Anne Goldbach**  
**Institution: Faculty of Education, University of Leipzig**

**30 August, 16h10 – 17h00, Zoom Main Conference Room**

**Title:**

**Participation and accessibility through Easy-to-Read?**

**Theory and research-based reflection on the risks and side effects of a practical concept**

**Abstract**

Easy-to-Read has become a successful concept in Germany in recent years. The range of products and services has multiplied, and information in Easy-to-Read is increasingly available at the workplace. The presence of Easy-to-Read in public spaces makes it clear that this functional variety of German Language is currently seen as a possibility to provide a (marginalized) group of people with information to which they previously had no or only difficult access. The potential of Easy-to-Read to convey information has so far hardly been questioned in public discourse. The extent to which this partly uncritical appropriation of Easy-to-Read can be agreed to will be discussed with the help of the results of two research projects.

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Saskia Schuppener is Professor of Pedagogy for Intellectual Disabilities at the Leipzig University. Her work and research focuses are: inclusive higher education development, disability education, participatory research & teaching, social space orientation & children's rights in the context of school inclusion, easy language & communicative accessibility and challenging behavior of people with intellectual disabilities. One focus of interest in the area of communicative barriers is the reflection of the (re)production of difference through the concept Easy language.

Anne Goldbach is a research associate for Intellectual Disabilities at the University of Leipzig. Her work and research focuses on: inclusive higher education development, participatory research & teaching, easy language & communicative accessibility, with a focus on reflecting (re)production mechanisms of difference through the concept of easy to read.



## Oral presentations

**Author:** Ella Airaksinen

**Institution:** Selkokeskus/Finnish Centre for Easy Language, Espoo

**Title:**

**How to address the reader in easy Finnish text? Improving the Easy-to-Read Finnish Meter's "interaction between the reader and the writer" criterion**

### Abstract

According to the established Easy Finnish Guidelines, it is important that the writer directs his or her message clearly to the target reader, for example using the pronoun *sinä* (you). But are there any other ways to address the reader in easy Finnish texts? How should one be polite in easy Finnish which aims to be as clear as possible?

In my presentation, I will discuss these questions and present new guidelines for how to address the reader of the easy Finnish text politely. The presentation is based on my master's thesis in which I studied how the target reader of two guide books is being addressed. I made a comparison between an Easy-to-Read guide book, *Selko-opas yrittäjyyteen* [An Easy-to-Read guide to entrepreneurship], and its standard language version *Perustamisopas alkavalle yrittäjälle 2018*, using Brown and Levinson's (1987 [1978]) term face and Halliday's (1994 [1985]) systemic functional grammar.

I will discuss the most important results of my thesis in comparison with the Easy-to-Read Finnish Meter. With the help of the guidelines for addressing the reader politely it is possible to improve the Easy-to-Read Finnish Meter's "interaction between the reader and the writer" criterion so that the meter serves the writers of easy Finnish texts even better.

### References

- Airaksinen, Ella (2019): Puhuttelevaa selkokieltä. Vertaileva tekstianalyysi puhuttelun keinoista ja kohteliaisuudesta selko- ja yleiskielisessä oppaassa. [Addressing in easy language. A comparative text analysis of the means to address and politeness in easy and standard language guides]. Master's thesis. Helsinki: University of Helsinki. <http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:hulib-202001281169>
- Brown, Penelope & Steven Levinson 1987 [1978]: Language and politeness: Some universals in language usage. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Halliday, Michael Alexander Kirkwood 1994 [1985]: An introduction to functional grammar. 2nd ed. London: Arnold.

**30 August, 13.00 – 13.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 4**



**Author: Mohammed Alnabulsi**

**Institution: Sharjah City of Humanitarian Services, Sharjah**

**Title:**

**Easy Read in Arab world**

**Abstract**

In spite of serious steps towards empowering people with disabilities and support them to accomplish their rights, however in the Arab world, still facing real challenges in this matter. Challenges to achieve a real inclusion for people with intellectual disability, but one of the biggest challenges is Easy Read. Easy Read in Arab world is a new concept, and we lack of qualified people to create Easy Read documents to support, and clear the doubts about the reading abilities for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS) is the first organization for people with disabilities in the united Arab Emirates since 1979, the organization is leading the work with people with disabilities in UAE with a number of initiatives with well specialized staff to support people with disabilities. One of its recent initiatives is to increase the awareness about Easy Read and building the capacity by training, which will be discussed in this paper.

This paper highlights a qualitative and a quantitative analysis of 42 participants work over a period of 2 weeks professional training. The Training which was divided in two programs was organized by SCHS and Easy Read online company from UK to give the trainees the required skills to create Easy Read documents for people with intellectual disability.

The participants were from different background (UAE, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Kuwait), which gave a variety of the work submitted as a final outcome of this training.

The 42 trainees submitted 32 files which were studied for this paper. It was found that main common indicators are the general challenges faces Easy Read in Arab world.

The quantitative analysis was conducted after the training to provide an overview how the training was and how they will use these new skills.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest some solutions and recommendations to solve these issues, especially with the lack of studies and research in the Arab world about Easy Read.

**30 August, 13.00 – 13.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 3**



**Author: Cathy Basterfield**

**Institution: Access Easy English, Melbourne**

**Title:**

**What's in a Name? Easy English, Easy Read, Accessible Communication: The journey forward.**

**Abstract**

Accessible written information is being developed for people with a wide range of literacy needs in Australia and internationally. This has been occurring in different parts of the world for over 20 years now. The labels most often used are Easy English (in Australia), Easy Read or Easy to Read and the language translations of these phrases. To date these phrases in Australia are often used interchangeably where documents labelled Easy English and Easy Read are both available. This paper will present a review of national and international perspectives on developing content that is described as being accessible. It will present this with reference to international and national legislation, policies, practices and current research including grey literature, and what this means for developing evidence-based practice accessible written information for people with different literacy needs. There is research and discussion occurring on the effectiveness or not of the various types of accessible written information. This review provides an up to date language analysis of Easy English, Easy Read and Easy-to-Read from around the world. Conclusion: In light of different communities of practice from different professional bodies from different parts of the world developing this content, it is becoming more important there is collaboration and interaction across and within these sectors. This data will continue to drive the conversations about the development of meaningful accessible written content for people with different literacy needs.

**30 August, 11.20 – 11.50, Breakout-Room: Panel 2**



**Authors: Cathy Basterfield**

**Institution: Access Easy English, Melbourne**

**Title:**

**Images everywhere: let's talk about them**

**Abstract**

Developers of accessible written information agree images add value to any document. This paper will address this critical element of accessible written information.

Images used functionally and meaningfully are shown to add as much value as quality written language and text. When images are not clearly considered they can

- reduce the readers emotional response to the content, including whether to firstly engage with the material;
- change what the readers understand;
- change their response to the text;
- change actions they undertake from reading the text.

How do we know which image to use, or when to use an image, or where to put it in a document? There is much research in this area, and in many different fields of endeavour. This presentation will provide an overview of some of the research from the field of disability, and in particular speech pathology. It will discuss how this research can apply to the development of Easy English, Easy Read, Easy to Read and accessible written information for the public.

An overview of some easily accessible image sets will be shared and illustrate how they are used to enhance communication for our audience.

**31 August, 9.05 – 9.35, Breakout-Room: Panel 7**



**Authors: Paolo Canavese; Prof. Annarita Felici; Dr. Cornelia Griebel**  
**Institution: University of Geneva**

**Title:**

**Institutional Communication in Plain and Easy-to-Read Language: A Case Study at the Swiss Federal Statistical Office**

**Abstract**

Plain language (PL) and Easy-to-Read language (EtR) are essential instruments to guarantee everyone universal accessibility to written information and full participation in society. Institutions are particularly sensitive to these issues and in recent times, most of them are turning their attention towards inclusive communication.

Switzerland has a long tradition of clear State-to-citizens communication, which is also connected to its multilingual, translation-mediated context of production (Canavese 2020: 26-29). Some institutions, such as the Parliament or the Federal Office of Public Health, have recently started to offer web pages in the three official EtR languages as well.

Our contribution stems from a real need in institutional practice. The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) is putting effort into making its communication accessible, including linguistic accessibility in EtR and PL German, French and Italian as well as English. Given the topic, the task is particularly challenging and original and requires two different dimensions of simplification, i.e. checking its content in terms of PL and gradually translating it into more accessible versions in terms of linguistic features and content. At the same time, it imposes a reflection on the heterogeneity of the Easy language target population. As per Bredel and Maaß (2016: 141), to date, there is no clear-cut profile of the target readership and of their reception needs. To address these issues, we relied both on a participant- and text-based approach. In this presentation, we will focus on the first one. After conducting exploratory interviews with different stakeholders within the FSO, we carried out a survey among FSO staff involved in drafting and translating texts. This allowed us to identify stances, experiences, needs, expectations and difficulties in terms of bridging the gap between precise citizens' information and language accessibility. It also helped us to single out particular target groups and suitable texts for accessible publications. The next step will consist in creating and testing simplified version of these texts according to the standards of plain (Baumert 2016, Kimble 1992) and easy language (Maaß 2020, Bock 2019, Inclusion Europe), also inspired by previous qualitative and quantitative investigations (Felici/Griebel 2019).

**References**

- Baumert, A. (2016). *Leichte Sprache - Einfache Sprache: Literaturrecherche - Interpretation - Entwicklung*. <https://serwiss.bib.hs-hannover.de/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/697/file/ES.pdf>
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- Kimble, J. (1992). Plain English: A Charter for Clear Writing. *Law Review* (9), 19-21.
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**30 August, 15.30 – 16.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 6**



**Authors:** Prof. Dr. Emmanuelle Canut<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Juliette Delahaie<sup>1</sup>; Dr. Magali Husianycia<sup>2</sup>; Dr. Julia Fuchs<sup>3</sup>

**Institution:** <sup>1</sup> University of Lille; <sup>2</sup> AsFoReL & ATILF-University of Lorraine; <sup>3</sup> Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz

**Title:**

**Linguistic criteria for “Easy Language” in French (FALC): an experiment with a migrant public**

### **Abstract**

Migrants find it difficult to understand written documents (brochures, letters from administration, posters, regulations, etc.). Therefore, professionals try to propose adapted supports but linguistically founded criteria for French “Easy Language” (Facile à Lire et à Comprendre) are still lacking, whereas they exist in other languages (see Ahrens, 2020, for German migrants). To fill this gap, we have proposed criteria based not only on advances in language science research, particularly in the field of corpus linguistics and oral syntax, but also on the skills of the speakers themselves in order to identify linguistic patterns closest to their area(s) of understanding (Canut, Delahaie & Husianycia, 2020).

To check these criteria empirically, we rewrote 6 informative texts for migrants and tested them with a questionnaire. They were pre-tested with migrants with a low level of French (A0 to A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), and texts were subjected to a comparative linguistic analysis with a large corpus of spoken French (CRFP, Ortolang). The experiment consisted in comparing the comprehension of the 6 original texts and the same 6 rewritten texts. We have divided these 12 texts into 3 groups of 4 texts, each group comprising 2 original non-simplified texts (one long and one short, with a high degree of lexical and syntactic complexity) and 2 rewritten texts (one long and one short, with a lower degree of lexical and syntactic complexity).

A total of 60 migrants participated in the study and the collected data is currently being analysed statistically. The results will show whether the defined criteria could be used as a basis for a reference framework for French “Easy Language” with regard to the second language learners target group. The present research contributes to a further development of linguistic criteria for “Easy Language” in French and their empirical validation.

**30 August, 12.30 – 13.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 4**





**Authors: Luisa Carrer<sup>1</sup>; Andrea Sterchi<sup>2</sup>**

**Institutions: <sup>1</sup> ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences; <sup>2</sup> AS Sprachbüro/infoeasy.ch**

**Title:**

**A survey on Easy Language in Switzerland: Service providers' perspectives**

Since Switzerland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014, the number of language providers offering services in Easy Language has steadily increased (Parpan et al. 2021, forth.). Similarly, federal initiatives for e-accessibility have since gained considerable momentum (cf. Federal Council 2019, November). Against this background, and in the context of a large-scale editorial project (cfr. Lindholm/Vanhatalo 2021, forth.), in 2020 we conducted an online survey among Easy Language service providers in Switzerland. The aim of the survey was to gain information and insights into providers' professional status and activities Swiss-wide.

The survey consisted of 20 items and included both closed-ended questions (e.g. dichotomous, Likert scale or rank order questions) and, albeit fewer in number, open-ended questions to collect qualitative data. Survey items were designed to investigate the following issues: type of services provided and client base, workload, professional training and experience, translation strategies and quality management systems, and, finally, remuneration. The survey was available in German, French and Italian and was distributed to a pool of Switzerland-based service providers via email. The survey was launched in August 2020 and was accessible for ten days through a commercial online survey tool. All data was collected anonymously.

The survey response rate was very satisfactory, suggesting high levels of interest and motivation from the target population. Seventeen participants responded, i.e. eleven from the German-speaking regions and three each from the Italian and French-speaking regions. Overall, the survey results indicate that there is a growing number of Easy Language service providers in all language regions, but the type of service, the provider workload and the client base differ. Thus, more professional exchange among providers and, ideally, a stronger interplay between practice and research, are needed.

In June 2021, we conducted a second survey designed to replicate the earlier study. Results will be presented at Klaara 2021.

**References**

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**30 August, 14.30– 15.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 5**





**Author: Elisa Casalegno**

**Institution: University of Geneva**

**Title:**

**A Comparison between Easy-to-Read Guidelines in French and Swiss Pedagogical Recommendations for Students with Special Educational Needs**

### **Abstract**

Most guidelines on how to write Easy-to-Read (EtR) texts focus on the needs of adults with intellectual disability or reading difficulties associated with low literacy, L2 speakers etc. (Diacquenod & Santi, 2018). As part of our project assessing the relevance of EtR materials for educational purposes (Casalegno, 2021, forthcoming), we are interested in the comparison between EtR guidelines and pedagogical recommendations regarding text adaptation for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Swiss Center for Special Education (SCSE) issued these recommendations to instruct teachers at mainstream schools on how to support students with different kinds of impairments. In addition to focussing on differentiated instruction and reasonable adjustments, they also address text adaptation. We have designed a three-step study beginning with the creation of two corpora, one comprising five of the most popular sets of French EtR guidelines and the other comprising the aforementioned SCSE recommendations. Secondly, we have coded and extracted the text simplification rules from both corpora using qualitative analysis software. The codes are based on an adapted version of O'Brien's (2003) categories for controlled languages, i.e., lexical, syntactic, text structure, pragmatic and typography. Thirdly, we have compared the results of both analyses to illustrate the similarities and differences, between not only the corpora, but also the documents that comprise them. The aggregated data shed some light on two different approaches to text simplification, their comprehensiveness and their limitations.

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**30 August, 12.00 – 12.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 3**



**Author: Valentina Crestani**  
**Institution: University of Milan**

**Title:**

**“Living” with(out) Architectural and Linguistic Barriers: German and Italian Easy Language**

**Abstract**

The paper intends to draw attention to the different situation of Easy Language in German-speaking countries (Germany and Switzerland) and in Italy, in particular with regard to institutional communication. While the official websites of ministries and public bodies in Germany and in Switzerland often present the version in Easy Language, the Italian websites do not generally present a reduced and simplified version according to the typical characteristics of this “conveyance variety” (Bock & Lange 2015). An exception is the website of the province of Bolzano, which offers, in addition to the version in difficult language (Italian and German), simplified texts in both languages in Easy Language (<https://lingua-facile.provincia.bz.it/default.asp>). The Easy Language version represents an interesting case involving two languages, whereas texts in Easy Language are usually analysed as the result of an intralingual translation (Bredel, Maaß 2016: 185). The analysis focuses on the thematization of the concept of “living” in the website of the province of Bolzano in German and Italian.

Since the objectives of Easy Language are the dissemination of information for people with intellectual disability and the participation of these people, the analysis addresses the following research questions:

1. How are specialist concepts relating to various aspects (e. g. architectural and financial ones) reformulated?
2. Which aspects are highlighted in comparison with the version in difficult language?
3. How is the concept of “person” as an active part of living linguistically realised?

The methodology of analysis adopted is Contrastive Linguistics: it constitutes a new and interesting perspective in research on Easy Language not only from a strictly linguistic point of view but also from a cultural one. Writing in Easy Language is in fact an act of linguistic mediation (Crestani 2020).

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**31 August, 12.00 – 12.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 10**



**Authors: Chiara Fioravanti<sup>1</sup>; Francesco Romano<sup>2</sup>**

**Institutions: <sup>1</sup> Institute of Legal Informatics and Judicial Systems (IGSG) of the Italian National Research Council; <sup>2</sup> Institute of Legal Informatics and Judicial Systems (IGSG) of the Italian National Research Council**

**Title:**

**Easy-to-read for migrant inclusion: creating a glossary on public administration terminology**

**Abstract**

How can Easy-to-Read language help recently-settled migrants to understand their rights and duties and decode the technical language that they will necessarily encounter in public administration offices?

This was experimented through the process of creating an illustrated Easy-to-Read glossary on Italian public administration terminology. The activities were carried out in the framework of a project funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to develop the PAeSI website

([www.immigrazione.regione.toscana.it](http://www.immigrazione.regione.toscana.it)) which provides information on procedures and norms regarding immigration in Italy. In simplifying the PAeSI information sheets on administrative procedures for the migrant audience, we learnt that it was better not to replace some terms, even complex ones, with simpler synonyms but to provide a simplified explanation. These terms are technical ones believed to be essential for migrants to know to favor inclusion in the host society.

The glossary was created in Easy-to-Read on the basis that even if this language was specifically designed for people with cognitive and learning disabilities, it is considered effective also for those who have basic second language skills like recent immigrants.

In the Easy-to-Read approach, then, the use of images has a fundamental role just as visual aids are considered important tools to convey messages to users from different cultural backgrounds.

The Human-centered design methodology was followed when applying the Easy-to-Read guidelines and creating the glossary: from design to implementation, stakeholders (linguistic-cultural mediators, immigration front-office civil servants, teachers of Italian as a second language) and end-users were involved through focus-groups and text-testing activities in an iterative process.

This paper aims to give insights on a method to apply Easy-to-read guidelines focusing on user participation as well as to reflect on the effectiveness of this language for migrants, providing specific additional considerations for this target derived from this experience that comprise both verbal and visual aspects.

**30 August, 14.30 – 15.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 6**



**Authors: Dr. Julia Fuchs<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Emmanuelle Canut<sup>2</sup>; Prof. Dr. Juliette Delahaie<sup>2</sup>; Dr. Magali Husianycia<sup>3</sup>**

**Institutions: <sup>1</sup> Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz; <sup>2</sup> University of Lille; <sup>3</sup> AsFoReL & ATILF- Université of Lorraine**

**Title:**

**Easy Language research beyond national boundaries. Comparing German “Leichte Sprache” and French “FALC”**

**Abstract**

Even though international cooperation and scientific exchange beyond national boundaries is very fruitful for research and can produce synergetic effects, German Easy Language (“Leichte Sprache”) has hardly been perceived in France and the French form of Easy Language, FALC (“Facile à lire et à comprendre”), has not (yet) been considered in Germany. A first comparative view reveals that in Germany, a Research Centre for Easy Language exists that published scientifically founded guidelines (e.g., Bredel & Maaß 2016); additionally, psycholinguistic studies have been or are currently being conducted to test the effectiveness of the existing rules (e.g., Fuchs, Schaeffer & Hansen-Schirra, in review). In contrast, the practical guidelines, emanating from the empowerment movement and containing mostly very vague rules, are still prevailing in France; French linguists have just begun to formulate first scientifically founded rules that are currently being tested with specific target groups (Canut, Delahaie & Husianycia 2020). Therefore, the present study seeks to

- (1) compare the existing German and French rules for Easy Language and
- (2) analyse whether and in what way the scientifically founded German rules could be made fruitful for further developing the existing French rules and, reciprocally, in which cases French rules could be applied to the German language.

The present collaborative research, conducted by a binational team of German and French linguists, makes a significant contribution not only to the internationalization of Easy Language research, but also and specifically to the optimization of existing rules with the aim of improving text offers for target groups.

**References**

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**30 August, 15.00 – 15.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 5**



**Author: Hanga Hegedűs**

**Institution: University of Szeged Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education**

**Title:**

**Examination of the receptive language abilities of 1-8. primary school students with intellectual disabilities with TROG-H test**

### **Abstract**

Good communication skills play key role in the active social life participation of people with intellectual disabilities. National education standards (guidelines, curriculum ect.) related to special needs education place emphasis on developing the language competencies of students with intellectual disabilities. On the other hand, based on the social model of disability, in the communication situation, besides the recipient (people with intellectual disabilities) we also focus on the communicator (in our case, the special education teacher). Based on the written rules of Easy-to-Read communication (Inclusion Europe, 2009), the communicator is expected to adapt his or her message to the language competencies of the recipient. At the same time, very few scientific results are available in Hungary about the characteristics of the language competencies of students with intellectual disabilities, as well as about the justification of the rules of creating Easy-to-Read messages (Hegedűs, 2020).

Thus we decided to conduct a research with students with intellectual disabilities who attend the 1-8 grades of primary school. The assessment of the understanding of grammatical structures was carried out with the standard TROG-H test (Lukács at all, 2011; Hungarian adaptation of the Test for the Reception of Grammar) in two schools in Budapest, one in Kecskemét and one in Kiskőrös. The TROG-H test works with standard sentences, it has 18 constructs and each construct works with different grammatical structure (from easy grammatical structures to the hard ones), so it gives us the opportunity to see which structures are difficult for students with intellectual disabilities. 77 students with intellectual disabilities were involved in fulfilling the test from 129 of the base population. In this presentation, only partial results are reported. Based on the analysis of the data obtained from TROG-H test, 4 constructs of understanding negative structures, we found that the understanding of negative structures poses a serious challenge to students with intellectual disabilities. Accordingly, we propose a method for teaching negative structures and new rules for producing an Easy-to-Read message. The research program which is implemented between 1/9/2020 and 30/6/2021 by the Gyula Juhász Faculty of Teacher Training, Szeged University, receives grants from the 'New National Excellence Program'.

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**31 August, 9.35 – 10.05, Breakout-Room: Panel 8**



**Authors: Dr. Péter László Horváth; Lili Ladányi**

**Institution: University of Szeged Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education**

**Title:**

**Development of Curriculum (DACUM) of special educators using Easy Language**

**Abstract**

In Hungary, there is no in-service training program for special education teachers that prepares them to use Easy Language in the public education system. According to the (1264./2019(V.7.) Government Decree on the Establishment of the Mórahalom Complex Development Center in Hungary, University of Szeged is implementing the project of "Creating an Easy Language Information Center (ELIC)" in 2020-23, which includes the aim to fill this gap.

During the process of developing the training program, we used the SCID (Systematic Curriculum & Instructional Development) and DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) methods. We established a working group of university lecturers, special educators and a self-advocate with intellectual disability.

During the conference presentation, we will detail the results of this process based on DACUM research. In the first step, we defined the job tasks that we believed that a special educator working with children with intellectual disabilities would actually perform while using Easy Language. With the DACUM job analysis, we defined 9 job task groups and 47 job tasks associated with them. We validated the job analysis results at four randomly selected elementary schools with 80 randomly selected special educators. Respondents had to indicate whether they actually perform a particular job task and if so, how often. A six-point scale was also used to rate how important they thought the job task was and how difficult they thought it was to prepare for it. The evaluation of the results of the validation led us to determine the expected learning outcomes in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework. The results show us what kind of Easy Language activities and tasks there are for teachers in public educational institutions working with children with learning or intellectual disabilities, and what knowledge, skills, attitudes, autonomy and responsibility they need to do their job at the highest possible level.

**30 August, 12.30 – 13.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 3**



**Authors: Sarah Jablotschkin; Prof. Dr. Heike Zinsmeister**  
**Institution: University of Hamburg**

**Title:**

**How simple wording can increase complexity – An analysis of “sein” in Simplified German**

**Abstract**

This talk contributes to the linguistic grounding of Simplified German. The motivation for our study is the observation that *sein* ('to be') is used more frequently in Simplified German than in Standard German which we explain by the recommendations of reducing lexical variation. We argue that there is a tension between vocabulary simplification on the one hand and an increase in potential ambiguities on the other hand. The latter one has a negative effect on comprehensibility by increasing text complexity. Our investigation is empirically grounded in LeiKo, a syntactically annotated corpus compiled from 216 news texts in Easy German (Jablotschkin & Zinsmeister 2020) and a small comparable Standard German corpus.

*Sein* is a versatile verb being structurally ambiguous between an auxiliary verb (1) on the one hand and a main verb with different readings as in (2)-(4) on the other hand. All examples are taken from LeiKo:

- (1) *In Deutschland sind große Partei-Spenden verboten.* (auxiliary verb: be + full verb)  
'In Germany, large party donations are prohibited.'
- (2) *Büchereien sind Orte für Begegnungen.* (full verb: be of type Y)  
'Libraries are meeting places.'
- (3) *In Hamburg sind am Wochenende 2 große Veranstaltungen.* (full verb: take place in Y)  
'In Hamburg, there are 2 big events on the weekend.'
- (4) *Im Parlament sind viele Politiker.* (full verb: be part of / work in)  
'There are many politicians in parliament.'

We discuss structural and lexical ambiguities with a special focus on examples such as (3) and (4), and evaluate them with regard to their effects on text complexity. Given that readability is not only dependent on linguistic material but also on the expectation and familiarity of the readership (Bock 2018: 86), we suggest for text production to consider not only the frequency of words but also their ambiguity potential.

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**31 August, 11.30 – 12.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 9**





**Authors:** Leealaura Leskelä, PhD candidate<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Camilla Lindholm<sup>2</sup>  
**Institutions:** <sup>1</sup> University of Helsinki; <sup>2</sup> University of Tampere

**Title:**

**Everyone has a right to communicate – but what does that mean in linguistically asymmetrical conversations?**

**Abstract**

In conversation analysis, linguistically asymmetrical interaction refers to encounters between persons with different language and communication skills, such as native and non-native speakers or persons with language and communication deficit and their co-participants (Kurhila 2006; Lindholm 2015). There is a growing need to find ways to balance the asymmetry and reduce the burden of linguistic complexity to improve these interactions. In Finland, the concept of Easy Language has been proposed as one mean to facilitate asymmetrical interaction (Leskelä 2012). But is Easy Language, which was developed for written contexts, also applicable to spoken language and interaction?

Our presentation focuses on authentic interaction between speakers with learning disabilities and their co-participants. The reasons for problems occurring in these conversations may lie in the linguistic and cognitive limitations of a person with learning disabilities. Still, many of the problems are linked to the actions of the co-participants and their ability to use understandable language. In these conversations, the co-participants encounter the challenges of seeking for common ground, negotiating about meanings and dealing with understanding troubles which may not be easily solved (Leskelä & Lindholm, forthcoming). We will discuss the practices used and challenges faced by the participants and outline the principles for Spoken Easy Finnish.

**References**

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**30 August, 12.00 – 12.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 4**





**Authors: Prof. Dr. Christiane Maaß<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Silvia Hansen-Schirra<sup>2</sup>**  
**Institutions: <sup>1</sup> University of Hildesheim; <sup>2</sup> University of Mainz**

**Title:**

**Easy Language, Plain Language, Easy Language Plus: Perspectives on Comprehensibility and Stigmatisation**

**Abstract**

In the countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (UN CRPD), access to information for people with disabilities has become an important issue. Depending on the different countries, Easy or Plain Language is the means of choice to improve the readability and comprehensibility of texts. This way, content becomes accessible not only to people with disabilities, but also to people who have no access to the original standard or expert texts for other reasons than disability, like migration or insufficient educational opportunities. However, the simplicity and uniformity of Easy Language (EL) seem to stigmatise the users. In turn, Plain Language (PL) is more acceptable but not sufficiently modelled as of now, resulting in a lack of standards worldwide. The paper will indicate ways to identify a possible trade-off between comprehensibility and stigmatisation in EL and PL. The balance point between those opposing principles is conceptualised as “Easy Language Plus” (EL+). EL+ is to be identified applying a user centred approach: On the basis of a corpus study of source texts in standard German and target texts in Easy German in order to detect translation strategies and typical linguistic patterns (Rink 2020) as well as an eyetracking study with different target groups (40 people with cognitive impairment, 40 migrants with low German proficiency, 40 elderly people and a control group of 40 students; Gutermuth 2020), the paper will shed light on how to determine the principles of perceptibility, comprehensibility as well as acceptability for the different target groups. These principles are, as we will argue, transferable across individual languages and across disabilities. They are the basis of modelling EL+ as a variety that enables translators to write comprehensible texts, which are not stigmatising in view of the target groups with special communication needs (see also Hansen-Schirra/Maaß 2020). EL text production differs from interlingual translation processes. In order to transfer EL+ to a functional text production, it is necessary to evaluate actual text production workflows of translations executed by professionals with different training and profiles. On this basis, we will identify the competences needed for intralingual translation into EL and PL and, eventually, EL+.

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**30 August, 10.50 – 11.20, Breakout-Room: Panel 2**



**Authors:** Dr. Rocío Bernabé Caro<sup>1</sup>; Dr. Anna Matamala<sup>2</sup>, Sergio Hernández Garrido, MA<sup>3</sup>  
**Institutions:** <sup>1</sup> International University SDI München; <sup>2</sup> Autonomous University of Barcelona; <sup>3</sup> University of Hildesheim

**Title:**

**Audiovisual content for all: Easy-to-Read Language in Audiovisual Translation**

**Abstract**

Easy-to-read language has traditionally focused on written texts, with growing interest in digital and web environments in recent years (see, for instance, WCAG standards and the work on cognitive accessibility on the web). However, the increasing societal relevance of audiovisual content calls for further work in at least two areas. On the one hand, there is a need to implement Easy Language principles in formats such as the audiovisual. On the other hand, there is a need to consider how Easy Language principles can be applied to existing audiovisual access services such as subtitling or audio description.

Aware of the two above-mentioned needs, EASIT (Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training), a European project funded under the Erasmus + Strategic Partnerships call, is researching how Easy-to-Understand audiovisual content could be created and how future professionals in the domain could be trained. More specifically, it aims to map current professional and training practices in Europe and produce recommendations for audiovisual content. It also aims to list the skills that future professionals should have and design a curriculum to train them. Finally, the project aims to generate open access training materials.

The presentation will summarise the main methods and results obtained so far in the project, namely:

1. a survey across European countries that has allowed to define current practices and training in the field,
2. a series of focus groups with professionals that have allowed to identify challenges and produce recommendations on how Easy-to-Understand audiovisual content and access services could be produced. In this regard, an interesting discussion on how to generate Easy-to-Understand access services for content which is not originally produced in Easy Language has taken place in the focus groups and will be discussed during the presentation;
3. an iterative design and discussion process which has allowed to identify three new professional profiles (and their corresponding skills card), together with a proposal for curriculum designs both at academic and vocational levels.

**30 August, 10.50 – 11.20, Breakout-Room: Panel 1**



**Author: Dr. Bronwyn Newman<sup>1</sup>, Professor Karen Fisher<sup>2</sup>, Professor Julian Trollor<sup>2</sup>**

**Institution: <sup>1</sup> Macquarie University, <sup>2</sup> Sydney, University of NSW, Sydney**

**Title:**

**Using Easy-to-Read information in Australian mental health services**

**Abstract**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability states that everyone has the right to information about health that they can understand. People with intellectual disability and their supporters often advocate for Easy-to-Read documents to facilitate information access. This study explored how Easy-to-Read was used in Australian mental health services.

**Method:** Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted across four sites. Participants (n=49) included people with intellectual disability, their carers/families, advocates and mental health practitioners. Interviews explored strategies that people with intellectual disability and health practitioners used to make information accessible, with a focus on Easy-to-Read. A health literacy framework was used to analyse the data.

**Findings:** Australian staff working in generalist mental health settings were unfamiliar with the term easy read. Easy-to-Read was not widely used for education, or facilitating decision making in mental health services, despite its use by people with intellectual disability in other settings. Easy-to-Read style documents were one of several strategies employed by mental health staff. Accessible agency practices and relationships to support communication within the health care context significantly impacted opportunities for people with intellectual disability to interact with information.

**Significance:** These findings confirmed that using Easy-to-Read in mental health services requires agency policy and practices that support access to information. People with intellectual disability were often excluded from gathering information and making decisions about their health, including mental health. This was attributed to many factors. Participants reported that increased Easy-to-Read availability within a culture of support, could give people with intellectual disability greater opportunity to access, understand, appraise and apply mental health information. Easy-to-Read is valuable as one of many communication strategies and increased use in a mental health context is worthy of further exploration.

**31 August, 11.30 – 12.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 10**



**Author: Agnieszka Przybyła-Wilkin**  
**Institution: University of Warsaw**

**Title:**

**Syntax of Easy-to-Read in Polish: conclusions from research on subjects with Down syndrome**

**Abstract**

The development of the Easy-to-Read model in Poland is still at an early stage. Due to recent legislation, requiring public sector organisations to publish Easy-to-Read information on their websites, some new initiatives have appeared, and more developments are expected in the nearest future. At the moment, however, Easy-to-Read texts, as well as studies on the topic in Poland, remain scarce.

The presentation will feature the results of a study conducted on subjects with Down syndrome. The main aim of the study was to establish whether refraining from the use of subordinate clauses (as recommended by Maaß (2015), Bredel/Maaß (2016) for German) is justified in all cases in the Polish Easy-to-Read texts.

In the population with Down syndrome, learning to read – at least to a certain extent – is possible in most cases. However, receptive syntax and reading comprehension tend to be the weaknesses of people affected, falling significantly behind their word decoding skills. Therefore, readers with Down syndrome appear to be adequate subjects to test the desirable degree of syntax simplification in Easy-to-Read texts.

The study presented uses a sentence-picture matching paradigm to compare the understanding of short complex sentences and their paraphrases expressed by sets of simple sentences. Various types of subordinate clauses were tested in order to identify possible differences depending on the grammatical construction or semantic relation.

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**31 August, 12.00 – 12.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 9**



**Authors: Leo Rutschmann; Dr. Sarah Ebling; Prof. Dr. Martin Volk**  
**Institution: University of Zurich**

**Title:**

**Image-Text Alignment for Simplified-Language Corpora and Text Generation**

**Abstract**

Guidelines for producing simplified language exist for various standard varieties, e.g. for German, the guidelines of Inclusion Europe (2009), Netzwerk Leichte Sprache (2009), the BITV 2.0 rule set (Bundesministerium der Justiz und für Verbraucherschutz 2011), and the rules by Bredel and Maaß (2016). Such guidelines generally agree that including images can help readers to better understand the content of a text.

More and more corpora with simplified-language texts are being compiled. Sometimes these corpora are parallel, i.e. each simplified-language document has a corresponding standard-language document, and sentences of the two documents are aligned to each other. Parallel corpora involving simplified language have been used to develop systems that automatically translate from standard into simplified language, e.g. from German into simplified German. Most simplified-language corpora, whether monolingual or part of parallel corpora, do not preserve any images present in the original documents. A recent exception is the corpus of Battisti et al. (2020).

The presentation proposed here aims at addressing the lack of research in the field of text-and-image alignment for simplified-language texts. It has two main areas of focus: It will demonstrate the potential of text-and-image corpora and will outline the challenges that arise when compiling them. Specifically, it will address the problem of alignment of images with text segments using state-of-the-art systems such as CATS (Štajner et al. 2018). A second focus will be on discussing the possibilities of automatic generation of simplified-language texts that include images. In particular, we will address the potential of collecting (absolute) positional data of images to determine whether images should be included and, if so, where. In this context, we will also discuss image complexity in simplified-language texts.

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**31 August, 9.35 – 10.05, Breakout-Room: Panel 7**



**Author: Dr. Floriana Carlotta Sciumbata**  
**Institution: University of Trieste**

**Title:**

**New Linguistic Guidelines to Write Easy-to-Read Information in Italian**

**Abstract**

The proposal presents new linguistic guidelines for Easy-to-Read that were recently designed for Italian. Several guidelines (e.g., Freyhoff et al. 1998, Nomura et al. 2010) have already been created, along with the European multilingual ones issued by the European association Inclusion Europe (2009). However, they are often vague and lack extensive linguistic indications. Furthermore, they were not specifically designed for a language. Therefore, writing Easy-to-Read texts in Italian relies heavily on the writers' and proofreaders' empirical knowledge; however, this can lead to non-standardised results that can prove insufficient for a wide audience with reading difficulties.

Indeed, several defects emerge in an analysis of Italian Easy-to-Read texts written following the existing guidelines, which will be discussed during the presentation. The analysis was carried out on a corpus of 98 texts (~106,000 words), mostly issued between 2009 and 2018 by associations working with people with intellectual disabilities, and including several types of texts (e.g., magazines, manuals, tourist guides, forms, and others). The corpus was analysed by using quantitative and qualitative methods, including the GULPease (Lucisano & Piemontese 1988) and the ReadIT (Dell'Orletta et al. 2011) readability indexes. Data show that texts have different readability levels even when addressed to the same recipient. Moreover, they often contain bureaucratise-like structures which are well-known obstacles for readability (Cortelazzo & Pellegrino, 2003; Piemontese, 1996), that can be avoided by adding more linguistic recommendations.

A new set of guidelines recently proposed and tested for Italian will be presented, illustrating the process and sources that led to their creation. Finally, we will show the results of a test in which 151 students (divided into 37 groups) attending the first year of the BA in Interlinguistic Applied Communication (University of Trieste) were asked to rewrite the same text by using either the standard European guidelines or the new Italian guidelines to assess the effectiveness of the latter. The resulting texts were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, including readability indexes. Findings showed that the new guidelines result in easier, clearer, and more explicit texts.

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**30 August, 15.30 – 16.00, Breakout-Room: Panel 5**



**Author: Idastiina Valtasalmi**  
**Institution: Tampere University**

**Title:**  
**Word association test for adults with intellectual disabilities**

### **Abstract**

Easy Language texts are written to audiences that consist of readers with varying language skills. In order to make language accessible and understandable to as many readers as possible, writers need to use vocabulary that is familiar and frequently used. While word frequencies can be assessed quite easily, familiarity is a more difficult question to answer. In this presentation, the question of familiarity is approached through a word association test that was used to examine the vocabulary knowledge of Finnish readers of Easy Language.

24 Finnish adults with intellectual disabilities participated in a selective word association test (see, for example, Read 1993; Read 2012) that was used to test their knowledge of words. 24 adults without disabilities took the test as a control group. The goal was to find out what lexical characteristics are likely to make words accessible to as many participants as possible. The test consisted of 20 items that were presented in the form of word webs (see, for example, Schoonen & Verhallen 2008). Each web included a trigger word and six other words. The participants were to match each trigger word with its synonyms and choose three words per set. Some of the distractor words were semantically related to trigger words to make the test more difficult.

Preliminary findings indicate that selective word association tests can be used to gain new information about the qualitative differences of word knowledge between Easy Language users and control groups. Additionally, the test can provide insights into individual variation within the target group. All this can help to assess and develop Easy Language guidelines, especially those regarding the use of synonyms.

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**31 August, 9.05 – 9.35, Breakout-Room: Panel 8**





**Authors:** Dr. Ulla Vanhatalo<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Camilla Lindholm<sup>2</sup>  
**Institutions:** <sup>1</sup> University of Helsinki; <sup>2</sup> University of Tampere

**Title:**

**Rephrasing PRIME-MD PHQ 2 Question Depression Screen in Easy and Translatable Language**

**Abstract**

People with immigrant background are at higher risk of mental health conditions, especially depression and anxiety symptoms (Rask & al. 2016). Understanding one's condition and committing to care are challenged by cultural and linguistic diversity: Screening and treatment procedures are based on cultural concepts and presented in abstract language, which often does not translate well between languages. Our pilot study applies the guidelines of Easy Finnish (Leskelä 2019) and Natural Semantic Metalanguage (Wierzbicka 2012, Wierzbicka 2014, Goddard 2019) for rephrasing PRIME-MD PHQ to screen depression in easy and translatable language. The Finnish version of the PRIME-MD PHQ screen was first translated into Basic Easy Finnish and the Easiest Easy Finnish. After the intralingual translations, the Easy Finnish versions were translated into Arabic, English, Farsi, Russian, and Swedish by professional translators. A piloting survey setting was created based on the resulting translations, aiming at assessing the usefulness of the different versions of the screen. Altogether ten professional interpreters working in health care completed the survey. In our presentation, we will report the translation process and present results from the piloting survey. Based on our pilot results with interpreters, we will continue our study with health care customers. Our pilot is preparing ground for further studies on Easy Language in the field of psychometrics, the theory and technique of psychological measurement. The expected ultimate result is that people with various linguistic challenges would better understand what kind of diagnosis is given to them and why.

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**30 August, 15.00 – 15.30, Breakout-Room: Panel 6**





**Author: Dr. Anna Wendorff**  
**Institution: University of Lodz**

**Title:**

**Simple and easy-to-read and understand language for the audio description of art**

**Abstract**

Scientists are more and more willing to search for the causes of disability not only in the particular limitations of the individual (the medical model), but also in a society that creates physical, social or economic barriers (the social model) (Greco 2019: 23-46; Bogucki, Deckert 2020). As if implicitly, it is assumed that society consists only of non-disabled people. In most cases, the cultural offer excludes the blind, visually impaired, and people with reading, memory or learning problems. If a site does offer an accessibility program, it is usually very poor as the process of customizing the materials is time-consuming, labor-intensive and expensive, as for each audience a different message is created depending on the type of disability (Bernabé, Orero 2021: 55-75).

This paper is a partial result of a project aimed at examining the use of Easy-to-Read and Understand text and Plain (Polish) language in audio description of visual arts, based on descriptions of abstract and conceptual art works from Polish museum collections, in accordance with the principle of universal design. Until now, simple Polish has been studied and implemented in the field of utility texts, mainly by the Simple Polish Workshop of the University of Wrocław. The proposed project aims to analyze the use of this language in relation to cultural texts. Conversely, text that was Easy-to-Read and Understand was applied to written content. The project aims to test the oral reception of these texts by researching the following question: will differently abled audiences using a simple description understand/remember artwork better than people using regular AD?

The following research methods were used in the project: participant observation, individual in-depth interviews (IDIs), questionnaire measures and psycho-physiological measurements with the use of an eye tracker; the analysis of the properties of eye movements will allow, among other things, an exploration of the involvement of the viewer and the cognitive process. The project complies with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as with the Polish Accessibility Plus Act of 2019 on providing accessibility to people with special needs. The final, future scientific effect of the project will be the creation of know-how: standards for creating accessible descriptions of works of art for everyone, regardless of physical disabilities, cognitive dysfunctions or knowledge of the (Polish) language.

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**30 August, 11.20 – 11.50, Breakout-Room: Panel 1**



## Workshops

**Author: Ulla Bohman**

**Institution: Boarve konsult AB, Stockholm**

**Title:**

**The 4 Components of Easy-to-Read**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of workshop is to introduce and/or increase the overall understanding of Easy to Read (EtR) not only being language issue for making information EtR for a target group with low reading skills/disabilities/language barriers. This workshop is for participants who do not have own or little experience of producing functional information in EtR.

Content of workshop

Information in EtR is information that is easy to understand. The workshop will clarify the four components of EtR information: Content, Language, Layout and Illustrations. These components must always be focused on the target group, the reader, if the result will be easy to read and understand. These components are equally important. If one of them is not easy to understand, the information will not be easy to understand.

There are some basic questions the writer must ask herself about the content when producing EtR information. The workshop will go through the who, why, what, when and also discuss issues of perspective. We will look at examples where the writer has used a wrong perspective and discuss what impact that has on the information.

Language is too often the only or main focus when EtR information is being discussed. The workshop will cover the basic guidelines for EtR language. But EtR is just as much the presentation. Without EtR layout and illustrations the target group will not even try to read the information. The recent Swedish project Begriplig text found 19 key elements for making a text accessible for a person who struggles with reading ([www.begripligtext.se](http://www.begripligtext.se)). These elements focus on structure and layout and not the language. The project confirms the recommendations regarding structure and layout given by the Centre for Easy to Read (CfLL) in Sweden for many years. CfLL:s recommendations were based on learning by doing in close contact with target groups.

The workshop will therefore show what impact the presentation has on the comprehension of the information. And, how it is linked to the target groups frames of references and cultural references, just as much as the language itself. We will look at the balance between "creative/interesting and functional layout", how to choose pictures/illustrations, how they must support each other and when it is better to not have pictures.

Workshop will also include the important perspective of inclusion. A reader must feel included in order to be motivated to read any information. I will give examples when this is not the case.

Workshop language will be English, but the content will be valid for any language group. The content is based on several years practice of running training in how to produce EtR information in Sweden and internationally.

**31 August, 11.30 – 13.00, Breakout-Room: Workshop 2**



**Authors:** Leela Laura Leskelä, PhD candidate<sup>1</sup>; Prof. Dr. Silvia Hansen-Schirra<sup>2</sup>; Dr. Silke Gutermuth<sup>2</sup>  
**Institutions:** <sup>1</sup> University of Helsinki; <sup>2</sup> Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

**Title:**

**Evaluating Easy and Plain Languages**

**Abstract**

There have been changes in legislation in many countries, which encourage and partly oblige authorities to use Easy or Plain Languages (Lang, 2019; Bredel & Maaß 2016). However, compliance with new legislation is difficult as long as there are no valid ways to define and validate whether a text is or is not easy to read and process. In addition, due to typological language differences, varying starting points and differing definitions, the comparability of these criteria across countries and languages and the evaluation thereof in terms of comprehensibility, acceptability and usability are, however, largely missing.

To address this problem, in Finland, the EtR Finnish Meter has been developed to evaluate to what extent a certain text can be considered to follow the criteria of Easy Finnish (Leskelä 2019). The meter is divided into four main sections including criteria for the text as a whole, vocabulary, morpho-syntax and visual features. It is designed for Finnish language - however its usability and adaptability for other languages is worth considering. In Germany, the research group "Simply complex!" has developed a multi-method approach testing the empirical validity of the postulated rules for Easy German using neuroscientific methods such as EEG, eye-tracking, and fMRI. Further approaches include - among others - the evaluation through focus groups (as being done in the LeiSA project) or quality metrics (e.g. the MQM scheme to evaluate the quality of translations).

The aim of this workshop is to present and discuss different ways to evaluate and validate Easy and Plain Language texts. We wish to bring up the strengths and weaknesses of different evaluation methods and discuss their adaptability and comparability across languages.

The workshop includes two parts:

- presenting and discussing of different evaluation methods
- developing an evaluation matrix with comparable criteria across languages

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**30 August, 14.30 – 16.00, Breakout-Room: Workshop 1**



## Posters

**Authors:** Carina Frondén<sup>1</sup>; Solveig Arle<sup>2</sup>  
**Institution:** <sup>1</sup>University of Helsinki <sup>2</sup>University of Tampere

**Title:**  
**Easy Swedish and readability**

### **Abstract**

Despite the increasing need of Easy Language, the research on easy Swedish remains limited. In Finland, 11-14% of the population are considered as users of Easy Language and about 5% of these users are Swedish-speaking. (Leskelä 2019, Juusola 2019) A literature search carried out using the keywords lätt språk, lätt svenska and lättläst (Easy Language, Easy Swedish and Easy-to-Read) using search engines for academic research such as MLA, Scopus Google Scholar, Helka, and Libris, shows that research in the field, although it has increased internationally in the past years, remains remarkably limited. Apart from master's and bachelor's theses, no linguistic research has been carried out specifically focusing on easy Swedish. In Scandinavian countries, principles for Easy-to-Read have been developed from a practical point of view in order to provide practical instructions for producers of Easy-to-Read texts (e.g. Leskelä 2019). This is also the case concerning Plain Language. However, the research within the fields of readability and psycholinguistics is extensive and can be considered relevant also to the field of Easy Language (Wengelin 2015).

Our contribution to the KLAARA Conference 2021 discusses research on easy Swedish. Using a meta-narrative approach we review papers and seek to identify underlying concepts and theories. The search methods combine literature searches using search engines for academic research with intuitive and opportunistic methods. Results demonstrate a lack of unified research traditions, different conceptualisations of Easy Language and focus on written texts.

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**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 1**



**Author: Sarah Guidi, Christa Notter, Sandra Weilenmann**

**Institution: DIMA Education, communication and integration for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, Zurich**

**Title:**

**«Plain Swiss German Sign Language» («Plain DSGS»)**

**Abstract**

DIMA offers courses and services for deaf and hard-of-hearing adults to support them in the integration into society and work. Our participants are persons who are born in Switzerland as well as persons who migrated as adults to the German part of Switzerland; some of them have never attended a school. Our teachers use intuitively a simplified form of Swiss German Sign Language ("Plain DSGS") especially in the communication with persons grown up in other countries.

Our observations show, that Plain DSGS compared to standard DSGS has e.g. the following characteristics: information is being divided in shorter units, mostly simple and iconic signs are being used, the signs are performed slower and it is used more facial expression and less mouthing. We assume that Plain DSGS and Plain Sign Languages generally are intralingual phenomena which show similarities to Easy-to-Read languages and foreigner talk.

We developed a project to find out more about plain DSGS and to get more accessible information for our target groups: So far the website of DIMA contains information in standard German and standard DSGS. Our aim is to examine plain DSGS with the focus of the linguistics and to add information in plain DSGS and Easy German (Leichte Sprache) to our website. The linguistic examination asks e.g.: What are the characteristics of plain DSGS? Does plain DSGS follow the grammar of standard DSGS?

The procedure is the following: Our teachers, who use DSGS as mother tongue, will sign information in standard DSGS as well as in plain DSGS. Then our participants from the target group (who need information in plain DSGS) check the version in plain DSGS concerning comprehensibility. If necessary, we make adaptations. In the next step we transcribe both versions (standard DSGS and plain DSGS) using the annotation tool ELAN and make a linguistic comparison (e.g., size of signing space, choice of signs, average length of sentences).

**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 1**



**Authors: Dr. Péter László Horváth; Beáta Német**  
**Institutions: University of Szeged Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education**

**Title:**

**How does the original and Easy-to-Understand recipe help in the process of learning how to make an instant soup?**

***Abstract***

In Hungary, as required by the curriculum, the sixth-grader students with intellectual disability have to acquire the knowledge of cooking instant soup. The question is: Are these students able to cook an instant soup based on the description of the packing? Can it help them during the learning process, if they are provided by Easy-to-Understand instruction?

We constructed two sequences of the process: text-photo and a photo-only description, both contain 30 steps. The photos were taken where the students cooked later. The empirical research was carried out in a segregated school. The success of the cooking process didn't only depend on the clarity of the recipe. In order to exclude other factors as much as possible, we chose students with similar characteristics. We surveyed the level of students' linguistic competence, as well as their prior knowledge on cooking instant soup (interviews with special teachers, personal observation). Eight students were included in the research. First, four students made instant soup based on the packings' description. A month later, based on Easy-to-Understand instruction; four students did it in a reverse order. The whole cooking process has been filmed in both variants.

The students who participated in the research cannot prepare instant soup by using only the packings' instruction. The second way of cooking was more successful regardless whether the first was done by the students using the original recipe description or an Easy-to-Understand recipe. Practice and repetition may play a greater role than the clarity of the instruction itself. Nevertheless, using an Easy-to-Understand recipe provides greater success and a more effective learning process than the using of the recipe on the packing, that causes many difficulties and failures.

**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 2**



**Author: Soilmaria Korhonen**

**Institution: Savonia University of Applied Sciences, Kuopio**

**Title:**

**Easy Language in Social and Health Care Studies - A case Study of Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Eastern Finland**

### **Abstract**

Easy Language (EL) is not yet in law in Finland. A law on the provision of digital services based on an EU directive requires the public sector to use clear language. However, the growing need for EL is recognized in the Finnish society. This presentation focuses on how Easy Finnish (EF) is integrated in bachelor's and master's degrees at Savonia University of Applied Sciences. From the fall programme 2020, EF has been included in every degree programme in the field of social and health care at Savonia UAS. Savonia UAS is among the first to train EF at this level.

EF was first piloted in 2018 in the online course. Since then, several educational models have been tested. Currently, EF is integrated into the studies of multicultural interaction. Implementation takes place through intensive collaboration with the local multicultural centre and national integration training. To date, the most appropriate model is to combine theory studies with a practical simulation for small teams at certain points of the studies. The simulations are carried out at the Savonia Simulation Centre, where students simulate health care cases with patient-actors who are immigrants, and who benefit considerably from EF in their real lives. Students are practising and obtaining a realistic view of EF in the context of health care, where a common native language may not exist.

After the simulation, an in-depth interactive analysis, debriefing, is held from the perspective of healthcare, multicultural interaction and language. Students, patient operators, and a healthcare and EF specialist analyse the simulation together based on the recording and participants' experience.

EF simulations are also collected as video material for research. The study will examine the adoption of EF in the social and health care sector by using the simulation method.

Interest in EF has awakened in public health care. It has taken Savonia UAS to regional development project and is expected to have a major impact on public health care in eastern Finland.

### **References**

<https://www.savonia.fi>

<https://simulaatiokeskus.savonia.fi/in-english>

**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 1**





**Authors: Dominik Pfütze; Dr. Sarah Ebling**  
**Institution: University of Zurich**

**Title:**  
**Sentence Alignment in the Context of Automatic Text Simplification**

### **Abstract**

Automatic text simplification denotes the process of automatically producing a simplified-language text. Most recently, the task has been approached within the framework of statistical (currently, neural) machine translation. For this, pairs of standard-language/simplified-language texts aligned at the sentence level (i.e., parallel corpora) are needed. In this paper, we report on the results of a human evaluation that compares four automatic sentence alignment tools: MASSAlign (Paetzold et al., 2017), CATS (Štajner et al., 2018), LHA (Nikolov and Hahnloser, 2018), and Sentence Transformer (Reimers and Gurevych, 2019).

As data, a new corpus built by our group is used that contains news items of the Austria Press Agency (Austria Presse Agentur, APA). At APA, four to six news items covering the topics of politics, economy, culture, and sports are manually simplified into two Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) levels, B1 and A2, each day (Council of Europe, 2009). Simplification follows the guidelines of capito (<https://www.capito.eu/>). The subset of data used for the evaluation reported in this paper contains Standard German news items along with their simplifications on level B1.

As part of the human evaluation, semantic overlap between 1,000 German/simplified German sentence pairs for each of the four tools above was judged on a four-point scale. Two human raters, both native users of German, performed the evaluation independently. The results of the evaluation provide insight into strengths and weaknesses of each of the tools investigated.

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**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 2**





**Authors: Ina Steinmetz; Karin Harbusch**  
**Institution: University Koblenz-Landau**

**Title:**

**A writing-support system utilizing ‘Leichte Sprache’ (LS; Easy-to-Read German) for people with low literacy skills**

**Abstract**

‘Leichte Sprache’ (LS) is a simplified variety of German characterized by simplified syntactic constructions and a small vocabulary (cf. Easy-to-read English). To date, texts in LS are generally produced by authors proficient in standard German. People with cognitive impairments or learning difficulties serve to evaluate ease of understandability. To the best of our knowledge, there is no easy-to-use LS-writing system offering linguistic support beyond phrasing simple sentences. Our goal is to help LS-readers to write texts LS themselves. This leads to our research question: Which types of support can help users with low literacy skills to write understandable, coherent text in LS? How can we transform concepts from natural-language text-production theory into intuitive on-demand dialogues with these users?

We present EasyTalk — a system for computer-assisted writing in LS, designed to enable LS-readers with low literacy skills to formulate correct and coherent texts through linguistic processing by computer, interactive grammar guidance and elements of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). EasyTalk implements the grammar of LS in a Natural Language Generator for the within-sentence support. In this paper, we focus on the mechanisms of EasyTalk to stimulate the writer to add text-understandability and text-coherence elements both on the constituent-construction level as well as on the sentence-combining level. The concept favorably compares to training units in the context of Writing Workshop techniques for elementary schoolers.

We report results from usability studies conducted with substitute users: L2 learners (German level CEFR A1-B1) with different native languages reviewed the new interface of EasyTalk that implements observations from interviews with experts in the area of accessible learning and barrier-free communication. They were asked to judge the simplicity/adequacy of the individual text creation steps to be performed.

Tests with participants with intellectual disabilities will be conducted as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic safely allows.

**31 August, 14.15 – 15.15, Breakout-Room: Postersession 2**