

ISW Colloquium – Spring Semester 2024

18.03.2024 | 16:00-17:00 | UniTobler F -111 (U1)

Hannah Hedegard (UniBE Department of English):

Language Analysis in the Swiss Asylum System (LAITSAS): Towards Inclusive Collaboration and Best Practice

The procedure known as Language Analysis for the Determination of Origin (LADO), i.e., the corroboration or contradiction of the claimed regional origins of asylum seekers based on systematic linguistic examination of their speech, is a common element of asylum protocol in unclear cases across Europe. A sub-field of forensic phonetics, LADO is a little-known applied linguistic practice that utilises fundamental principles from sociolinguistics and language description. In this talk, I present an extended collaborative research project at Universität Bern with LINGUA (the unit responsible for LADO in the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration). Recounting the organisation and output of a round table connecting LINGUA analysts, academic experts, and other forensic specialists a year ago, as well as outlining in-house research assignments that target agency-specific challenges, I set out how these kinds of activities and close cooperation between practitioners and scholars can further best practice in the LADO context.