



PRIN Conference

INFORMAL ENGLISH LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF VOICES AND PATHWAYS

9th May, 2025

Aula Bottigella, Palazzo San Tommaso

Piazza del Lino 2

Università degli Studi di Pavia

9:30 Welcome address and opening remarks

FEDERICO FORNERIS, Vice-rector for Research, University of Pavia

LUCA VANZAGO, Head of the Department of Humanities, University of Pavia

GIUSEPPE BALIRANO, President of The Italian Association for the Study of English (AIA)

MARIA PAVESI, Principal investigator, University of Pavia

10:00 KEYNOTE LECTURE

Chair: Francesca Bianchi, University of Salento

SANDRO CARUANA, University of Malta

Informal L2 learning and acquisition via the media: state of the art and future perspectives

10:50 Coffee break

11:15 A NATIONAL SURVEY ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' INFORMAL EXPERIENCE WITH ENGLISH

Researchers involved in data analysis: Maria Pavesi, Francesca Bianchi, Silvia Bruti, Raffaele Zago, Elena Ballante, Maicol Formentelli, Elisa Ghia, Nicoletta Simi

Chair: Paola Leone, University of Salento

MARIA PAVESI, University of Pavia

In contact with English: Investigating present-day informal language learning

FRANCESCA BIANCHI*, ELISA GHIA** and CRISTINA MARIOTTI**

*University of Salento, **University of Pavia

A global view on informal contact with English in Italian universities

MARIA PAVESI, ELENA BALLANTE, University of Pavia

What shapes informal contact with English?



ELENA BALLANTE, MAICOL FORMENTELLI, University of Pavia

Informal input and lexical comprehension: A close-up on the statistical analysis

MAICOL FORMENTELLI, University of Pavia

Exploring users' reasons for accessing English-language media

13:00 **Lunch break**

14:15 **DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY RESULTS**

Chair: Flavio Ceravolo

PAOLO DELLA PUTTA, University of Turin

Imparare l'inglese frequentandolo. Dati e implicazioni del progetto "The informalisation of English language learning through the media"

15:00 **ENGLISH USE, ATTITUDES AND LEARNING OVER TIME**

Chair: Iain Halliday, University of Catania

PAOLA LEONE*, EMANUELA PAONE**

*University of Salento, **University of Bologna

Motivazione di studenti universitari all'esposizione informale all'inglese L2: una prospettiva longitudinale

IRENE RANZATO*, MASSIMO STURIALE**

*Sapienza University of Rome, **University of Milan

Attitudes towards British screen accents in informal second language learning

16:00 **Coffee break**

16:15 **ROUNDTABLE**

Voices from within: Reflecting on one year of informal language learning through the media

Moderator: CAMILLA DE RISO, University of Pavia

Participants: FRANCESCO AGOSTINI, ANDREA BRUTTO, SOFIA CATELLI, ELENA LONGO, BEATRICE VERGERIO, FILIPPO ZEME

Discussant: BRONWEN HUGHES, University of Naples Parthenope

17:15 **Closing remarks**



The ecology of language use and language learning has drastically changed in Europe and beyond, as media affordances around the individual L2 user offer unprecedented opportunities to experience English in daily life. In response to these evolving English-centred ecologies, research on second language acquisition (SLA) has increasingly shifted its focus from traditional classroom settings to non-institutional, naturalistic environments. This shift in emphasis has led to empirical investigations into the role of informal exposure to English across Europe, particularly in relation to media-driven and digitally mediated language contact.

The national PRIN project “The informalisation of English language learning through the media: Language input, learning outcomes and sociolinguistic attitudes from an Italian perspective” represents the first large-scale study in Italy to investigate the impact of emerging language environments upon the behaviour of university students and their English SLA. The study collected over 4,000 valid questionnaires and lexical tests from students enrolled at the Universities of Pavia, Pisa, Salento, and Catania, providing extensive empirical data on informal exposure to English. A series of interviews and longitudinal case studies were also conducted, allowing participants to articulate their experiences while enabling researchers to trace their L2 developmental trajectories beyond formal classroom settings.

In this one-day conference, we will present and discuss key findings of the PRIN project by placing them within the expanding field of Informal Language Learning. The study highlights the diverse and dynamic ways in which university students engage with English, revealing novel patterns in spontaneous, media-related language acquisition and appropriation. The event further serves as a platform for disseminating the research findings to both the academic community and the participants who made the data collection possible.

Registration to the conference:

<https://forms.gle/hQLYjf37Utb nugzW6>

Participation is free of charge.

Registration is open until full capacity is reached.

Contacts: camilla.deriso@unipv.it



Scientific committee: Maria Pavesi, Giuseppe Balirano, Francesca Bianchi, Silvia Bruti, Francesca Costa, Bronwen Hughes, Maicol Formentelli, Elisa Ghia, Cristina Mariotti, Elisa Perego, Raffaele Zago

Local organising committee: Maria Pavesi, Luca Briatico, Camilla De Riso, Maicol Formentelli, Elisa Ghia, Elena Giribaldi, Silvia Monti

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Website: <https://prin.unipv.it/index.php/en/>