

## Gastvortrag:

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### **ON THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF AN URBAN VERNACULAR** – Linguistic and meta-linguistic heritage of first generation Italian miners in Flanders (Belgium) –

In this presentation I will trace the emergence of a Flemish urban vernacular (often called *Citétaal*, Marzo 2016), by exploring the (meta-)linguistic heritage of Italian mine workers families that arrived in Belgium after the Second World War. On the basis of historical research, discourse analysis of texts and sociolinguistic interviews, I describe how the complex linguistic integration of first-generation migrants, that was scarcely noticed and debated until the 1960s, has been picked up and enregistered by second- and third-generation Italians in Limburg. I will show how first generation's hybrid linguistic practices have come to be linked to one particular mining city (Genk) and 'enregistered' as an urban vernacular of this place (Agha 2003; Johnstone et al. 2006).

I explain this evolution in three steps. First, I describe the complex contact-linguistic situation of first generation miners' families. I will then present the linguistic consequences of this situation, by describing the emergence of a multilingual, but mainly French-based mining jargon among miners. In a third step, I place the social and linguistic situation of first-generation miners at the root of the urban vernacular *Citétaal* that is used among youngsters and young adolescents.

**Keywords:** heritage Italian, mining language, Flanders, urban vernacular, enregisterment

#### **References**

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