**Language learning in context: The Role of Native-Language Skills in the At-Home and Study Abroad Settings**

Adult second language (L2) acquisition starts with an already established first language (L1) system, which has traditionally been regarded as a source of errors, hindering learning. Nonetheless, there is evidence that the linguistic skills developed in the L1 can predict success in L2 development among immersed bilingual speakers as well as adult classroom learners. In this talk, I will explore L1 effects from a skill-transfer perspective, examining how variability in L2 learning is related to individual differences in L1 skills, and whether this relationship is mediated by the context in which language learning takes place. I will focus on the predictive role of L1 grammatical knowledge and processing skills on learners’ development of L2 grammatical skills and overall proficiency after a semester of L2 study in the at-home university context and the study abroad setting. This work confirms significant language variability in the L1 as well as in L2 learning gains and provides new insights into how L2 development is shaped by language skills evidenced through the L1.