Keynote Speaker
Dr. Galina Elizarova
National Cultural Values and International Education in English: Conflict Resolution.

Within the framework of cognitive linguistics (Langacker, 1987, Talmy, 2000), Dr. Elizarova analyses learning foreign languages as a part of human cognition. Emphasis is given to the nature of one’s own native culture and how it affects all personal aspects. They certainly include communication in another language. The latter becomes critical when learners lack exposure to the cultural values of the target language community. Drawing on her own research, Dr. Elizarova demonstrates how Russian university students construe messages in English relying on their native conceptualization of time, personal space, law, etc. When these students go on exchange to the United States, they realize that their messages, albeit morpho-syntactically correct, convey values and beliefs that are strikingly different from those of the target culture. For example, some students truly believe that if they process ideas from the literature to the point that they feel the ideas become their own, they are less obliged to cite the corresponding sources. Approaches to resolving conflicts through cultural mediation as a classroom practice are offered.

If you have any question, please contact Natalia Balyasnikova cils.ubc@ubc.ca

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