PhD program in Linguistics

Course Catalogue, Academic Year 2024/2025

Updated: 24 Sept 2024

Overview

Date	Short title	Instructor (Proponent)
14.10.2024	Introduction to prosody (unibz)	D'Imperio (Vietti)
15.10.2024	Individual cognitive differences affect pragmatic meaning extraction from intonational cues (unibz)	D'Imperio (Vietti)
24.10.2024	VinKiamo as a best practice for citizen science: the example of German varieties in the Alps (UniVR)	Bertollo
Winter School in Linguistics UniVR, 20.01.-24.01.2025 20-22.1.: Inflectional Morphology 22-24.1.: Linguistics and Large Language Models		Rabanus Delfitto, Padovan
26.02.2025	Investigating linguistic variables using oral data: the AlpiLinK corpus (UniVR)	Rabanus
Summer School in Linguistics unibz, summer 2025 [exact date and contents to be defined] Generation and Analysis of Corpora Theory and Practice of Transcription		Abel Spreafico

Title	**Introduction to prosody**
Teacher	Mariapaola D'Imperio (Laboratoire Parole et Langage, LPL - Aix-Marseille Université)
Coordinator	Alessandro Vietti
Compulsory/free choice?	Free choice
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	2/0.5
When?	14 October, 15.00-17.00
Where?	unibz (Bolzano Campus), Aula E 5.22
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	In class.
Learning outcomes	At the end of this short introductory course, attendees will have familiarized with basic theoretical and methodological concepts adopted in the study of prosody.
Course contents	In this seminar, we will first go through definitions of prosody and cover its components (including phenomena like stress, intonation, phrasing) and their phonological representation. Then we will discuss how can we examine elements of prosody in the acoustic signal and mention what are their formal (phonological) relations and representations.
Reading	– Ladd, D.Rr. (1996). Intonational Phonology. Cambridge University Press. – D'Imperio, M. (2002). "Italian intonation: An overview and some questions". *Probus*, vol. 14, no. 1. 2002, p. 37-69. – D'Imperio, M. and D. House (1997). "Perception of questions and statements in Neapolitan Italian", Proceedings of Eurospeech '97, 1, 251-254, Rhodes.

Title	**Individual cognitive differences affect pragmatic meaning extraction from intonational cues**
Teacher	Mariapaola D'Imperio (Laboratoire Parole et Langage, LPL - Aix-Marseille Université)
Coordinator	Alessandro Vietti
Compulsory/free choice	Free choice
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	2/0.5
When	15 October, 15.00-17.00
Where	unibz (Bolzano Campus), Aula E 5.22
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	In class.
Learning outcomes	At the end of this talk, attendees will have a better understanding on the individual and group variability of the relationship between intonation and pragmatic meaning.
Course contents	The pragmatic valence of intonation contours has been under investigation for various decades, though only recently studies have unveiled that both group- and talker-specific strategies are employed at the level of meaning decoding in prosodically variable stimuli (e.g. Warren 2016 for uptalk in New Zealand English). Variability in encoding intonational meaning has focused on pitch contour variability in production. Co-speech gestures have also been recently found to variably mark information structure and appear to precede prosodic encoding in children (Estève-Gibert et al., 2021). In this talk I will offer evidence showing that the intonation-meaning mapping is not homogeneous within a language-community. Specifically, I will show the results of two recent studies on the role of pragmatic skills on recovering intonational meaning. I will first briefly show the results of an Eyetracking study on French intonation processing showing the impact of individual empathy scores on recovering contrastive meaning (Esteve-Gibert et al. 2020). I will then present a perception experiment in which the role of pitch range in the nuclear configuration region is tested as a predictor of type (negative vs positive) and degree of epistemic bias in Salerno Italian (Orrico & D'Imperio 2020). Here, two independent sources of individual variability were uncovered: Listeners' prolonged exposure to either a different language or variety and their Empathy Quotient (EQ), which interacted in epistemic bias identification. I will then discuss the results in terms of viable theoretical models of intonation-meaning mapping.
Reading	– Cangemi, F., M. Krüger, M. Grice (2015). "Listener-specific perception of speaker-specific production in intonation". In Susanne Fuchs, Daniel Pape, Caterina Petrone, Pascal Perrier (eds.), Individual Differences in Speech Production and Perception, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang (pp. 123-145). – Esteve-Gibert, N., Lœvenbruck, H., Dohen, M. & D'Imperio, M. (2021). "Pre-schoolers use head gestures (and not prosody yet) to highlight important information in speech". Developmental Science. – Esteve-Gibert, N., Schafer, A., Hemforth, B., Portes, C., Pozniak, C. & D'Imperio, M. (2020). "Intonation and empathy in the online processing of contrastive meaning in French". Memory & Cognition, 48(4), 566-580. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13421-019-00990-w – Orrico, R. & D'Imperio, M. (2020). "Individual empathy levels affect gradual intonation-meaning mapping: The case of biased questions in Salerno Italian". Laboratory Phonology: Journal of the Association

for Laboratory Phonology 11(1): 12, pp. 1–39. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/labphon.238
- Portes, C., & German, J. S. (2019). "Implicit effects of regional cues on the interpretation of intonation by Corsican French listeners". Laboratory Phonology: Journal of the Association for Laboratory Phonology 10(1): 22, pp. 1–26. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/labphon.162
- Warren, P. (2017). "The interpretation of prosodic variability in the context of accompanying sociophonetic cues". Laboratory Phonology: Journal of the Association for Laboratory Phonology, 8(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/labphon.92.

Title	**VinKiamo as a best practice for citizen science: the example of German varieties in the Alps**
Teacher	Sabrina Bertollo
Coordinator UniVR/unibz	Stefan Rabanus (stefan.rabanus@univr.it)
Compulsory/free choice	Free choice
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	4/1
When	24th October 2024, 14.00-17.00
Where	UniVR - Aula Co-working
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	In class
Learning outcomes	On successful completion of this workshop, PhD students will be able to demonstrate to: - be familiar with the notion of citizen science; - be aware of the importance of involving the general public in the research; - be able to design public outreach activities concerning their own research to make it visible and comprehensible to non specialistic audiences.
Course contents	VinKiamo (https://alpilink.it/vinkiamo/) is a citizen science project connected with AlpiLinK, which involves High Schools to foster the awareness on multi- and plurilingualism, collect linguistic data via crowdsourcing and analyze dialectal data as a starting point to understand the regularities of the languages. In its "classical" form VinKiamo has involved 620 students, 26 schools and 84 teachers in Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino, South-Tyrol and Aosta Valley, not to mention satellite projects on linguistic autobiography, linguistic landscape and data analysis with 250 students, 11 schools, and 30 teachers. In the theoretical part of the lesson, we will discuss the notion of citizen science, its implementation in VinKiamo and case study crowdsourcing practices in German varieties in the Alps (Cimbrian, Tyrolean and Timavese). In the practical part of the lesson, PhD students will be trained to find possible declinations of their own research projects in a citizen science perspective (if applicable) and make them accessible to non-academic audiences.
Reading	*To become acquainted with the term* citizen science *and learn about the VinKiamo experience, the following preliminary readings are suggested:* K. Vohland et al. (2021) (eds.), *The science of citizen science*. Springer. (13-34; 97-118). https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/46119 Bertollo, Sabrina & Stefan Rabanus (2023): VinKiamo: ein Citizen-Science-Projekt für Schulen zur Förderung von (sprach)übergreifenden Kompetenzen. *ALSIC* 26(1). https://journals.openedition.org/alsic/7076

Title	**Inflectional Morphology: Agreement, Syncretism and Paradigm Structure**
Teacher	Stefan Rabanus
Coordinator UniVR/unibz	Stefan Rabanus (stefan.rabanus@univr.it)
Compulsory/free choice?	Compulsory
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	10/2.5
When?	20 January 2025, 14.00-17.00

	21 January 2025, 10.00-12.00, 14.00-17.00 22 January 2025, 10.00-12.00
Where?	UniVR - Aula Co-Working
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	PhD Students can choose aspects of the module as topic of their term paper.
Learning outcomes	On successful completion of this module, PhD students will be able to: - summarize categories and markers of inflectional morphology; - compare different languages with respect to morphological categories and marking; - relate empirical findings to morphological theory; - demonstrate a deeper understanding of the thematic fields of 'agreement' 'syncretism', 'paradigm structure'; - show proficiency in morphosyntactic analysis, especially in the use of the Leipzig Glossing Rules, by both writing and interpreting glosses.
Course contents	The course will provide basic knowledge in inflectional morphology. With 'agreement', 'syncretism' and 'paradigm structure' three central concepts will be discussed in more detail. The concepts will be exemplified mainly with data from Indo-European standard languages. For German and Italian also other contemporary und historical varieties will be considered, in accordance with the PhD programme's special focus on dialects and minority languages. A third-year PhD student will contribute a case study on historical dialectology of German.
Reading	- Baerman, Matthew/Brown, Dunstan/Corbett, Greville G. (2005): The Syntax-Morphology Interface. A Study of Syncretism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. - Corbett, Greville G. (2006): Agreement. Cambridge University Press. - Haspelmath, Martin (2002): Understanding Morphology. London: Arnold. - Stump, Gregory T. (2016): Inflectional Paradigms: Content and Form at the Syntax-Morphology Interface. Cambridge University Press.

Title	**Linguistics and Large Language Models**
Teacher	Denis Delfitto, Andrea Padovan
Coordinator UniVR/unibz	Stefan Rabanus (stefan.rabanus@univr.it)
Compulsory/free choice?	Compulsory
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	10/2.5
When?	Wednesday 22 January, 14.00-17.00, Co-working Thursday 23 January, 10.00-12.00, T.10 Thursday 23 January, 14.00-17.00, T.10 Friday 24 January, 10.00-12.00, T.10
Where?	UniVR - Aula Co-Working, T.10
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	PhD Students can choose aspects of the module as topic of their term paper.
Learning outcomes	On successful completion of this module, PhD students will acquire a basic knowledge in the nature and use of Large Language Models (LLM) and recent developments in AI in text analysis and text production
Course contents	This 10-hour course will introduce students to the key features of Large Language Models (LLMs) and their relationship with natural language. The course will cover (i) a brief introduction to the basic mathematical notions that are necessary to understand the developments in Machine Learning (ML) that led to LLMs and (ii) a critical discussion of some influential papers that deal with the LLMs' impact on applied and theoretical linguistics. More particularly, there have been interesting debates about the models' ability to produce grammatical sentences and understand complex syntactic constructions. Some of the questions that arise are: (i) how can models display such a high level of proficiency in some linguistic domains? (ii) which are the differences (or the commonalities) with human linguistic competence? (iii) in which linguistic domains are models currently underperforming and what could be done to improve their performance? (iv) what are the consequences for theories on language acquisition? (v) how can models impact research methodology in applied and theoretical linguistics? Some case studies with both ChatGPT and Google Gemini will be presented to showcase the grammatical performance of LLMs. The course will also explore the concept of 'emergent skills' in LLMs and the associated scientific debate.
Reading	to be comunicated

Title	**Investigating linguistic variables using oral data: the AlpiLinK corpus**
Teacher	Stefan Rabanus
Coordinator UniVR/unibz	Stefan Rabanus (stefan.rabanus@univr.it)
Compulsory/free choice	Free choice
Teaching hours/ECTS credits	4/1
When	26 February 2025, 14.00-17.00
Where	UniVR - Aula Co-working
Language of instruction	English
Assessment	In class
Learning outcomes	On successful completion of this workshop, PhD students will be able to demonstrate to: - know how to create a linguistic questionnaire which is adequate for crosslinguistic analyses; - be familiar with the structure of language-data repositories; - be able to extract features from audio recordings and organize the data analysis in way which allows for geolinguistic interpretations (using Excel tables or similar tools).
Course contents	AlpiLinK (https://alpilink.it) provides a comprehensive and rapidly growing parallel corpus with crowdsourced audio data from all dialects and minority languages of the northern Italian regions: Piedmont, Aosta Valley, Lombardy, Veneto, Trentino-South Tyrol and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. By 17 June 2024 the repository featured 35.489 audio files produced by 1003 speakers (https://zenodo.org/records/11352290). In the theoretical part the questionnaire design will be illustrated and students will be introduced to the linguistic analysis of the data. In the practical part PhD students will be trained to conduct their own analyses of the data.
Reading	*Reading: since there are no publications on the AlpiLinK corpus creation and analysis, yet, the articles deal with the VinKo project and corpus. However, AlpiLinK is the continuation of VinKo, hence, VinKo and AlpiLinK share basic features.* Kruijt, Anne, Stefan Rabanus & Marta Tagliani (2023): The VinKo Corpus. Oral data from Romance and Germanic local varieties of Northern Italy. In: Marc Kupietz & Thomas Schmidt (eds.): Neue Entwicklungen in der Korpuslandschaft der Germanistik. Beiträge zur IDS-Methodenmesse 2022. Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 203–212. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24053/9783823396024> Kruijt, Anne, Patrizia Cordin & Stefan Rabanus (2023): On the validity of crowdsourced data. In: Elissa Pustka, Carmen Quijada Van den Berghe & Verena Weiland (eds.): Corpus Dialectology. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, 10–33. <https://doi.org/10.1075/scl.110.01kru>