

TITLE: THE EDWARDIAN POSTCARD: DEVELOPING A CITIZEN HUMANITIES APPROACH

PROJECT REFERENCE: GillenSPRINT

SUPERVISOR: Professor Julia Gillen

DATE(S): Project will run in June or August 2023 (as the student prefers).

JOB DESCRIPTION: The Edwardian Postcard Project is a research project which is particularly geared to communicating with public audiences. Older generations are interested in local or family history dimensions and younger people often respond to parallels with today's social media. The project has recently deposited a collection, including transcriptions, of 3000 postcards with Lancaster Digital Collections. You will be involved with developing a new citizen humanities approach on a bespoke platform, working to recruit and communicate with people willing to upload scans of their cards, or transcribe cards, or access project data for their own purposes.

Your main duties include:

- Operating the citizen humanities platform (full training given)
- Using social media to recruit new participants and publicise the project
- Transcribe some postcards
- Contribute to an in person or online event

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- A systematic approach to work including record-keeping
- Good communication skills in written and oral modes
- Good overall time-management skills
- Experience of using social media for other than purely personal purposes is desirable but not essential

TITLE: Discourses around vaccinations during the Covid-19 pandemic

PROJECT REFERENCE: SeminoSPRINT

SUPERVISOR(S): Professor Elena Semino

DATE(S): The project will run in summer 2023.

JOB DESCRIPTION: According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), one of the 10 top threats to global health is vaccine hesitancy - 'a delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services'. Due to vaccine hesitancy, for example, in 2019 the UK lost its WHO measles-free status.

Since the start of the pandemic, vaccines against Covid-19 have received enormous attention in the media and social media. On the one hand, they are presented as the main reason why, in countries such as the UK, pre-pandemic life has resumed in spite of continuing waves of infections. On the other hand, the sharing of vaccine hesitant and anti-vaccination views, especially online, can undermine ongoing vaccination campaigns in the UK and other countries, with consequences for individual and public health.

You will join the team of a government-funded [project](#) (Questioning Vaccination Discourse: A Corpus-based Study) and carry out a corpus-based discourse analysis of discourses around vaccinations in a dataset collected from the mainstream media or social media since early 2020. The specific focus of the project will be decided based on priority areas at the relevant point. However, the goal will be to use linguistic analysis to explore vaccine-related representations and views during the pandemic. As part of the larger project, the findings have the potential to inform public health campaigns about vaccinations.

Your main duties include:

- Collect and prepare a relevant corpus or corpora;
- Use corpus-based discourse analysis to investigate representations of vaccines and views about vaccinations in the corpus/corpora;
- Present the results of your findings to the project supervisor and the larger project team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have:

- an interest in language and (public) health
- an ability to carry out both quantitative and qualitative linguistic analyses
- good overall time-management skills
- some familiarity with corpus linguistic methods – this is desirable but not essential

TITLE: Accent variation in historic north Lancashire

PROJECT REFERENCE: NanceSPRINT

SUPERVISOR: Dr Claire Nance

DATE: June/July 2022 (exact dates negotiable)

JOB DESCRIPTION: You will be working with a corpus of oral history recordings stored in this archive: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/regional-heritage-centre/elizabeth-roberts-working-class-oral-history-archive/>. The data were collected from working class speakers who were born in the late 19th or early 20th century in the 1970s. The speakers are from Barrow, Lancaster or Preston so the dataset is an amazing resource for speech in north Lancashire 120 years ago. The project is investigating accent features in north Lancashire and will use a combination of auditory phonetics and acoustic analysis. The aim is to investigate the historic dialect of north Lancashire and eventually examine the extent to which this has changed over the past 120 years. Your role will involve working with existing transcripts and producing a corrected, time-aligned transcript of the audio data; then extracting relevant tokens; conducting auditory and acoustic analysis; writing up results. Full training will be provided.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would

- Be interested in sociophonetic analysis
- Be interested in Lancashire dialect
- Be able to work independently and also discuss results with the supervisor
- Have good attention to detail
- Have an interest in learning new quantitative analysis skills

NOTES: Full training will be provided!

TITLE: The role of creativity and working memory in second language writing performance

PROJECT REFERENCE: KormosSPRINT

SUPERVISOR(S): Professor Judit Kormos

DATE(S): Project will run in June 2023.

JOB DESCRIPTION: The general purpose of the study is to examine the role of creativity and working memory in second language writing performance. Specifically, I am interested in analyzing the relationship between creative fluency, diversity and elaboration, creative personality, working memory and the features and quality of second language narrative and argumentative tasks.

Your main duties include:

- Participate in rater training
- Evaluate and analyze 200 short essays based on specific criteria
- Compare a sample of your ratings with another rater
- Enter the data in a data file
- Present results to supervisor

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- Interest in second/foreign language learning and teaching (with a focus on assessment)
- Attention to linguistic detail and precision
- Good overall time-management skills
- Basic skills with Excel
- Some experience in mentoring second language users particularly in the writing domain might be advantageous but is not required

TITLE: Analysing Computer-Generated Speech

PROJECT REFERENCE: BrownKirchhuebelSPRINT

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr George Brown and Dr Christin Kirchhübel (of *Soundscape Voice Evidence*)

DATE(S): Project will run in June 2023.

JOB DESCRIPTION: Since 2017, we have seen rapid developments in speech synthesis technology whereby these technologies are capable of generating increasingly human-like speech samples. Recent work by the project supervisors (Kirchhübel and Brown, 2022) showed that some computer-generated speech is remarkably human-like, even from the perspective of experienced forensic phoneticians.

The current project aims to look more closely at speech data produced by state-of-the-art speech synthesis technology to uncover relevant acoustic and phonetic characteristics. The intern will be expected to carry out different types of acoustic and phonetic analysis on synthetic speech and compare those analyses with an analysis of human-produced speech. The intern will explore different ways of inspecting and presenting the analysis findings through different means of data visualisation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- An enthusiastic interest in forensic phonetics
- Experience using Praat
- Exceptional organisation skills
- Good communication skills
- Attention to detail

NOTES: Training in the measuring of acoustic and phonetic features will be provided.

REFERENCES

Kirchhübel, C. and Brown, G. (2022). Spoofed speech from the perspective of a forensic phonetician. Proceedings of Interspeech. Incheon, South Korea. [See: https://www.isca-speech.org/archive/pdfs/interspeech_2022/kirchhubel22_interspeech.pdf]

TITLE: Visualization of linguistic data and materials development

PROJECT REFERENCE: BrezinaBottiniSPRINT

SUPERVISOR(S): Professor Vaclav Brezina and Dr Raffaella Bottini

DATE(S): Project will run in June or July 2023

JOB DESCRIPTION: The ESRC Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science ([CASS](#)), Lancaster University is a world leading research institution for the corpus analysis of language. It supports development of new tools and techniques of linguistic analysis as well as the application of corpus methods to a range of areas including healthcare communication, sociolinguistics, and language teaching.

The main aim of this project is 1) to support engagement activities of CASS with the wider community and 2) to make our tools and techniques accessible to a wide range of users. For this, we will be producing a series of handouts, booklets, and other materials, including content for social media. Join our team and learn how we carry out high-impact research and how we communicate about this research with a range of stakeholders.

We are looking for a candidate who:

- Can write clear descriptions and explanations.
- Is creative and can use MS Office (Word, Excel and PowerPoint).
- Pays attention to detail and likes producing handouts and other materials.
- Has good communication skills and can work in a team.

Training will be provided.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

- General interest in linguistic methods and innovation.
- Good level of computer literacy, knowledge of social media.
- Strong ability to work independently and as part of a team.

TITLE: EN CLAIR: FORENSIC LINGUISTICS, LITERARY DETECTION, AND LANGUAGE MYSTERIES PODCAST

PROJECT REFERENCE: HardakerSPRINT

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Claire Hardaker

DATE(S): Project will run in Summer 2023

JOB DESCRIPTION: The overall purpose of this project is to investigate cases that involve forensic linguistics (e.g. the Derek Bentley case), literary detection (e.g. who wrote Shakespeare?), and/or language mysteries (e.g. the Voynich Manuscript). The successful intern will undertake the research necessary to create engaging scripts for several podcast episodes. Specifically, your duties will include:

- Agreeing on a number of cases from a long-list that you will focus your efforts on
- Undertaking substantial open source intelligence gathering, including finding, reading, and saving media articles/broadcasts, court documents, case data, individual biographies, and so forth
- Creating a thoroughly well-evidenced timeline of events from the inception of the case to its conclusion
- Interns with a gift for writing will have the opportunity to write scripts

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- A very keen eye for details, inconsistencies, and alternative perspectives
- The tenacity to investigate complex cases far beyond simple media reports. this will include, e.g. reading legal documents, analysing data, listening to police interviews, etc
- A high standard of evidence-collecting, sifting, and presenting
- A willingness and ability to work unsupervised
- Excellent discretion. The successful candidate will be asked to maintain a sensible degree of confidentiality about all aspects of the upcoming second season until its formal launch

NOTE 1: This position will involve looking in fine detail at one or more cases. It's likely that some of those cases will involve murder, suicide, serious assault, or other subjects that some will find distressing. The cases will be agreed between supervisor and intern at the start of the project, and not all the cases on the long-list are on distressing topics, but overall, **this post is unlikely to be suitable for anyone who does not wish to deal with sensitive topics.**

NOTE 2: If this runs as a SPRINT (summertime) project, the successful candidate is welcome to work for the entire duration remotely. All meetings and contact can be carried out via Teams and/or email.

TITLE: Gender, Language and Animation Resource (GLARe)

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Johnny Unger

DATE(S): June 2023

JOB DESCRIPTION: You will help Johnny continue to develop GLARe, an online resource designed to help students and other researchers who want to investigate how gender is represented and how gender stereotypes are used in animated films. In doing this, you will contribute to the creation of new blog posts about gender and animated films which will be aimed at students interested in this area, and also finding new relevant research. Your duties may include

- Making/checking transcripts (both of verbal text and audiovisual features) of animated films
- Coding and analysing specific features (eg. Identifying gendered forms of address, stereotypically gendered language features or gendered aspects of the visual representation of characters)
- Doing literature searches for recent literature on gender and animated film
- Writing drafts of or sections of the blog posts (you will be credited as a contributor in this case)

GLARe will be launched before Christmas 2022 - but even if it hasn't been launched yet, you can already get an idea of what it will look like here: <https://wp.lancs.ac.uk/glare/>

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- Interest in discourse analysis, language and gender, and analysis of visual texts
- Keen eye for detail and systematic approach to data analysis
- Organised and able to keep references, data and findings organised
- Writes in an accessible and engaging way

NOTES: You will have the chance to give some input/make suggestions regarding the choice of films to analyse. Training on coding and analysis will be provided. To get an idea of the kind of analysis you might end up doing, you can look at Unger & Sunderland 2005 (available here tinyurl.com/shrekpaper).