TITLE: How Do Adults Process Relative Clauses?

PROJECT REFERENCE: ChanBrandtTRINITY

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Jacky Chan & Dr Silke Brandt

DATE(S): Project will run during Lent Term (Term 2).

JOB DESCRIPTION: The main purpose of the project is to find out how morphosyntactic and discourse-level factors influence adults' understanding of different types of relative clauses. In particular, we are interested in how noun phrase type (lexical noun phrase vs. pronoun) and givenness of the embedded noun phrase in a relative clause influence adults' processing of subject and object relative clauses. This is part of a larger study that looks into how young children process relative clauses. This project will involve collecting adult data from monolingual English-speaking adults on campus for comparison with child data to investigate developmental differences in language learners/users' processing of relative clauses. An eye-tracking study is already programmed on PsychoPy. Your main duties include:
- Recruiting and testing adult participants
- Cleaning and processing data
- Meeting with supervisors regularly to discuss progress and problems

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:
- Interest in learning how to carry out eye-tracking experiments
- Ability/willingness to work independently to recruit and test participants in a timely and efficient manner
- Proficiency working with Microsoft Excel
- Have taken or will take LING228/LING316
- A background in child language acquisition or psycholinguistics is desirable but not essential

NOTES: Full training in conducting the eye-tracking experiment will be provided.

TITLE: Analysing Computer-Generated Speech

PROJECT REFERENCE: BrownKirchhuebelTRINITY

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

DATE(S): Project will run in Term 2

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: BLACKBURN: THE STUDY OF THE SPEECH COMMUNITY

PROJECT REFERENCE: TurtonLennonTRINITY

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Danielle Turton and Dr Robert Lennon

DATE(S): Project will run in Term 2 2022-2023

JOB DESCRIPTION: A sociolinguistic research assistant is required for a project in Linguistics and English Language looking at the accent and dialect of Blackburn. *10,000 sounds from Blackburn, Lancashire* is a study of variation and change in the accent. The purpose of the project is to record sociolinguistic interviews with speakers from Blackburn in Lancashire in order to analyse potential variation and change in the accent. This project will also involve transcribing and coding interviews for sociolinguistic variables and thus you will be trained in the latest cutting-edge transcription and forced-alignment/automatic speech recognition software.

Your main duties will include:
· Recruiting and carrying out sociolinguistic interviews with speakers from Blackburn
· Transcribing interviews
· Coding interviews for style (e.g. informal, formal, word-lists)
· Presenting results to supervisor

PERSON SPECIFICATION: The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:
· The ability/willingness to recruit and interview speakers from the area (access to the speech community is essential)
· The perfect sociolinguistic interviewer is friendly, open and good at eliciting conversation.
· Close attention to detail in transcription
· Interest in accents and dialects
· A background in sociolinguistics is desirable but not essential

NOTES: Full training in sociolinguistic interviewing, transcription and coding of phonetic data will be provided in the first week of the project.

TITLE: Linguistic data collection and digital resources

PROJECT REFERENCE: GablasovaBottiniTRINITY

SUPERVISOR(S): Dana Gablasova, Raffaella Bottini

DATE(S): Term 2, 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 to support existing research which involves 1) the collection of linguistic data and 2) the engagement with the wider community. For this, we will be collecting linguistic data for research and producing handouts, short videos, webpages, and other digital materials. 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 digital 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.

- Preferable (but not essential): can use video editing software (for example, Adobe Creative Cloud OR iMovie)

TITLE: What makes language(s) easier or harder to learn? Experimental approaches to language learning and cognition

PROJECT REFERENCE: RebuschatMonaghanTRINITY

SUPERVISORS: Professor Patrick Rebuschat and Professor Padraic Monaghan

DATE(S): Project will run in term 2.

JOB DESCRIPTION: We are studying the cognitive processes involved in language learning in children and adults. In doing so, we aim to characterize the learning mechanism(s) underpinning our ability to rapidly learn novel sounds, words and grammar, to explain what makes some of us better at learning new languages than others, and to develop methods of supporting language learning in adults.

This work is conducted collaboratively within the Lancaster Language Learning Lab (4L), which is co-directed by the two supervisors. The lab is a cross-departmental initiative, involving researchers and students from Linguistics and Psychology.

The purpose of our current experiments is to investigate how adult learners acquire the sound system and the morphology of a novel language. We use artificial languages (based on Japanese, Portuguese, German and other natural languages) as learning targets in lab-based experiments. In a typical study, participants are first trained on an artificial language, then they are tested to determine what they have learned. We find that adult learners can rapidly acquire words and grammar (without intending to and without awareness of what learned) by unconsciously tracking information across multiple learning trials, a process called "cross-situational statistical learning." The following recent papers illustrate our type of research.

- Rebuschat, P., Monaghan, P., & Schoetensack, C. (2021). Learning vocabulary and grammar from cross-situational statistics. *Cognition, 206*. Open access, click the link to read.
- Monaghan, P., Schoetensack, C., & Rebuschat, P. (2019). A single paradigm for implicit and statistical learning. *Topics in Cognitive Science, 11*(3), 536-554. Open access, click the link to read.

As an intern, you would join our research group and receive training in experimental design, data acquisition and analysis. Your main duties would include the following:

- Attending the weekly lab meetings for the duration of the internship
- Setting up the experiment(s), e.g. by creating stimuli, tasks, etc.
- Recruiting and testing participants, either on campus or online
- Coding and analysing data
- Presenting results at lab meetings

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

- Interest in joining a cross-disciplinary research group, involving researchers and students from Linguistics and Psychology
- Interest in learning how to run psycholinguistic experiments
- Ability to recruit and test participants in a timely and efficient manner
- Good overall time-management skills
- A background in psycholinguistics, psychology or cognitive science is desirable but not essential

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

PROJECT REFERENCE: HardakerTRINITY

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Claire Hardaker

DATE(S): Project will run in Term 2.

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**.

TITLE: Gender, Language and Animation Resource (GLARe)

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Johnny Unger

DATE(S): Term 2 2022-23

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 resarch. 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).