

TITLE: Typology meets corpus linguistics: Insultive constructions in the world's languages

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Daniel Van Olmen

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: TRINITY

DATE(S): The project will run in Term 2, one day a week.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Recent (joint) work by the project supervisor has shown that there exist constructions in language which are partly conventionalized for insulting an addressee, such as Afrikaans *jou idioot!* 'you idiot!' (lit. 'your idiot!'), or for which it is their dedicated function, such as French *espèce d'idiot!* 'you idiot!' (lit. 'species of idiot!'). Such insultive constructions have received relatively little attention in cross-linguistic/typological research, despite preliminary observations about likely shared features (e.g. genitive/possessive marking, second person pronouns). The main reason for this gap is that few grammatical descriptions discuss insultive constructions and the information is therefore difficult to find by hand.

This current project aims to address this problem, by turning grammatical descriptions of the world's languages into a corpus and applying corpus linguistic methods to the data. The intern will be expected to: (i) search for keywords related to insultive constructions; (ii) check the query results for potentially relevant information; (iii) consult the grammatical description itself and determine whether or not the language in question possesses an insultive construction; and (iv) bring together the findings and attempt to identify any shared linguistic features.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:

- An enthusiastic interest in linguistic typology
- Some experience using corpus tools
- Good organizational skills
- Some experience in data management
- Attention to detail

NOTES: Training in the corpus tools to be used will be provided.

TITLE: Accent and identity in Korean

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Justin Lo

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: TRINITY

DATE(S): Term 2, 2024–25

JOB DESCRIPTION: You will contribute to a project in collaboration with colleagues at University College London, where we are studying the accent characteristics of the North Korean community in London. The social dynamics between North and South Koreans in London contrast starkly with those in South Korea, where most North Korean refugees reside. We are interested in how this different relationship shapes the way North Koreans in London speak Korean. You will work with the supervisor to prepare existing audio data for analysis, carry out acoustic analysis of key sociolinguistic variables, and compare the speech of North Koreans to that of South Koreans. You will also help with recruiting Korean speakers in Lancaster and collecting new recordings for comparison with the London community.

Your main duties will include:

- Checking automatically generated transcripts of audio recordings
- Conducting auditory and acoustic analysis of consonants
- Recruiting South Korean speakers from the Lancaster area
- Collecting audio recordings at the Phonetics Lab
- Basic data analysis

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

- Interest in accents and phonetics
- Strong attention to detail
- Ability to come up with and pursue leads to recruit relevant speakers
- Experience in or willingness to learn the software Praat for acoustic analysis
- Working knowledge of Korean (desirable but not essential)

NOTES: Training in data collection, data preparation and acoustic analysis will be provided. You will also have the opportunity to join regular meetings at the Phonetics Lab and UCL Sociolinguistics Lab to experience our research environments and learn from other researchers.

TITLE: Gender, Language and Animation Resource (GLARe)

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Johnny Unger

DATE(S): Term 2 2024-25 (TRINITY)

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 is a work in progress, but there's a fair bit of content already, which you can see here: 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 [the analyses already on GLARe](#) or Unger & Sunderland 2005 (available here tinyurl.com/shrekpaper).

TITLE: Investigating and Supporting Language Use in Nurseries and Preschools

SUPERVISOR(S): Professor Silke Brandt

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: TRINITY

DATE(S): The project will start at the beginning of term 2.

JOB DESCRIPTION: Children's exposure to mental-state language (e.g., I THINK that the cat is hiding under the sofa) supports their developing understanding of others' mental states and perspectives, which is, in turn, linked to their academic success and social development (e.g. reading skills, number of mutual friendships). However, most previous research in this area is based on lab-based experiments and observations. In this current project, we want to investigate how much mental-state language is used naturally in early childhood education settings. We also want to explore whether there are specific contexts or activities that lead to higher proportions of mental-state language by staff interacting with children in nurseries and preschools. Finally, we want to train staff to use more mental-state language and investigate whether this training has a positive effect on children's academic and social development.

The intern will be expected to transcribe, code and analyse the use of mental-state (and other) language by nursery and preschool staff. If a DBS check is in place, the intern can help with the observations and recordings. The intern will also be able to contribute to our development of training materials and activities for nursery and preschool staff.

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

- An enthusiastic interest in child language acquisition, early childhood education, social development
- Experience transcribing spontaneous speech
- Exceptional organisation skills
- Good communication skills
- DBS check (optional)

NOTES: Training for coding and data analysis will be provided.

TITLE: International engagement for linguistic research and teaching

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Dana Gablasova, Dr Raffaella Bottini

DATE(S): Term 2, 2025

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The main aim of this project is to support existing international research and teaching collaborations at the LAEL department and at the ESRC Centre for Corpus Approaches to Social Science ([CASS](#)). CASS 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.

For this project, we will be collecting linguistic data for research, organising international events, as well as producing handouts, short videos, webpages, and other digital materials for an international audience. 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: Turning covert surveillance into high-quality intelligence: the L10NESS dataset

SUPERVISOR(S): Professor Claire Hardaker

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: TRINITY

DATE(S): Term 2

JOB DESCRIPTION: A key challenge in criminal and intelligence investigations involves working with poor quality audio data. This can be from CCTV recordings, Ring door cameras, body-worn video footage, covert surveillance, and so forth. Analysts may be asked to ascribe speech to the correct speaker, to transcribe content that is particularly difficult to hear, or both. Being able to do these tasks accurately, and potentially under pressure, are critical skills. As part of our ongoing work in this field, we have created L10NESS, a unique dataset of ecologically valid surveillance-style recordings by ten Lancastrian speakers. Each speaker has provided three voicemails, two “criminal gang” interactions, and a simulated police interview. This current internship will (1) provide canonical, intelligence-grade transcriptions of selected parts of that dataset, and (2) identify key segments for future training and simulation scenarios. The ideal candidate may also have the opportunity to extend this training material by, e.g. providing a backstory to the materials.

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

- An enthusiastic interest in forensic linguistics and/or forensic speech science
- Experience using, or a willingness to learn how to use Audacity (or an equivalent like GarageBand if the student prefers this and has access to it)
- Exceptional organisational skills
- Good communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Excellent discretion