TITLE: Mapping Dialect Variation in Contemporary British English

SUPERVISOR: Dr Danielle Turton

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: SPRINT

DATE(S): June or July (exact timing to be confirmed)

JOB DESCRIPTION:
This project supports the development of updated dialect maps for key phonological variables in British English, as part of a broader study of language variation and change *Our Dialects*. The intern's main task will be to assist in the reclassification of participant occupation data into social class categories — a crucial but detail-oriented process. In addition, the intern will help with basic mapping and data organisation, as well as background research on specific dialect features. There may also be opportunities to assist in creating social media content to share key findings with a wider audience.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:
The ideal candidate would have:

- An interest in dialects, sociolinguistics, or phonological variation
- A good eye for detail and comfort with repetitive data tasks
- Basic familiarity with spreadsheets and quantitative methods (e.g. Excel)
- Reliable organisational skills
- Interest in science communication or social media (desirable but not required)

NOTES:
Full training and guidance will be provided. This internship is particularly well-suited to students considering dissertation projects in variationist sociolinguistics or those looking to gain experience with real-world research data.

TITLE: Who's talking? Human and AI-generated voice perception and recognition

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Justin Lo

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: SPRINT

DATE(S): June, July or August 2026

JOB DESCRIPTION:
Human voices carry rich information that allows us to build an impression of who is talking and what they are like as a person, or recognise a speaker if we have come across their voice before. In this study, we are interested in how we perceive and recognise AI-generated voices, and whether these processes work in a similar way to human-voices. You will work with the supervisor to create and implement an experimental task for voice perception and/or recognition, and then gather pilot data to evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of its design.
Your main duties will include:
- Comparing and evaluating the suitability of experimental paradigms in the recent literature on voice perception and recognition
- Creating one or more perception experiments using existing audio samples
- Gathering and analysing pilot responses

PERSON SPECIFICATION:
The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:
- Strong interest in speech science
- Logical thinking and systematic approach to designing an experiment
- Ability to work independently
- Experience with or willingness to learn the online experiment builder Gorilla

TITLE: Gender, Language and Animation Resource (GLARe)

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr Johnny Unger

DATE(S): Term 2 2025-26 (TRINITY) or June/July 2025 (SPRINT)

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: Bot or Not: Music Edition

SUPERVISOR(S): Prof Claire Hardaker

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: SPRINT or TRINITY

DATE(S): The project will run over July, August, and/or September 2026 (exact timing to be confirmed for SPRINT), or one day per week during Term 2 (TRINITY).

JOB DESCRIPTION:
This project forms part of the wider *Bot or Not* research series, which explores how convincingly AI systems can mimic human creativity across different media. In the *Music Edition*, the focus us on singing – both human and AI-generated – to again understand how well ordinary humans can tell the two apart.
The intern will help to collect and curate samples of human-created music from a range of social media platforms and other online sources. The role will involve identifying potential examples, contacting creators to request permission, maintaining detailed records of sources and metadata, and contributing to the development of our interactive online quiz.
As a result, this internship will provide experience in data management, research ethics, and project design in a swiftly evolving context.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:
The ideal candidate will:
- Be confident and experienced using social media platforms
- Have an active interest in music across different genres and styles
- Be willing and able to communicate professionally with content creators online
- Demonstrate strong organisational and record-keeping skills
- Have an inherent curiosity about AI, creativity, and the human interpretation of both

NOTES:
The work can be carried out fully remotely.

TITLE: An evaluation of public trust in AI-based voice identification performance

SUPERVISOR(S): Dr George Brown

INTERNSHIP SCHEME: SPRINT

DATE(S): The project will run in June or July (exact timing to be negotiated at a later stage)

JOB DESCRIPTION:
The scientific community has reached saturation point in demonstrating the performance of AI-based voice identification technology. According to the scientific literature, state-of-the-art voice identification technologies repeatedly return remarkably low error rates on a range of datasets. The scientific literature has instilled enough confidence in voice identification technologies to deploy them across sectors. For some time now, voice identification technologies have been featuring in fraud investigations, security mechanisms and more. However, as stakeholders of the organisations that have taken the decision and liberty to deploy these technologies, how well does the general public expect today's voice identification technology to perform? This project aims to gain insight into the trust and expectations that the public have of AI-based voice identification technology.

For this project, the intern will not be running technical experiments using AI-based voice identification technology or other computational methods. Instead, the intern will be expected to assist in designing and compiling a short *Qualtrics* survey that will prompt a range of participants to indicate how well they expect voice identification technology to perform. The intern will then be expected to distribute the survey to later gather and analyse the participant responses.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:
The ideal candidate would have the following characteristics:
- An enthusiastic interest in forensic speech science and/or forensic linguistics
- An interest in responsible AI and ethical issues
- Some experience in building online surveys or similar
- Qualities that would help with recruiting participants (publicity/marketing skills)
- Exceptional organisational skills
- Good communication skills
- Attention to detail

NOTES: Training on the specific details of the project will of course be provided.