



Newsletter

FALL 2024

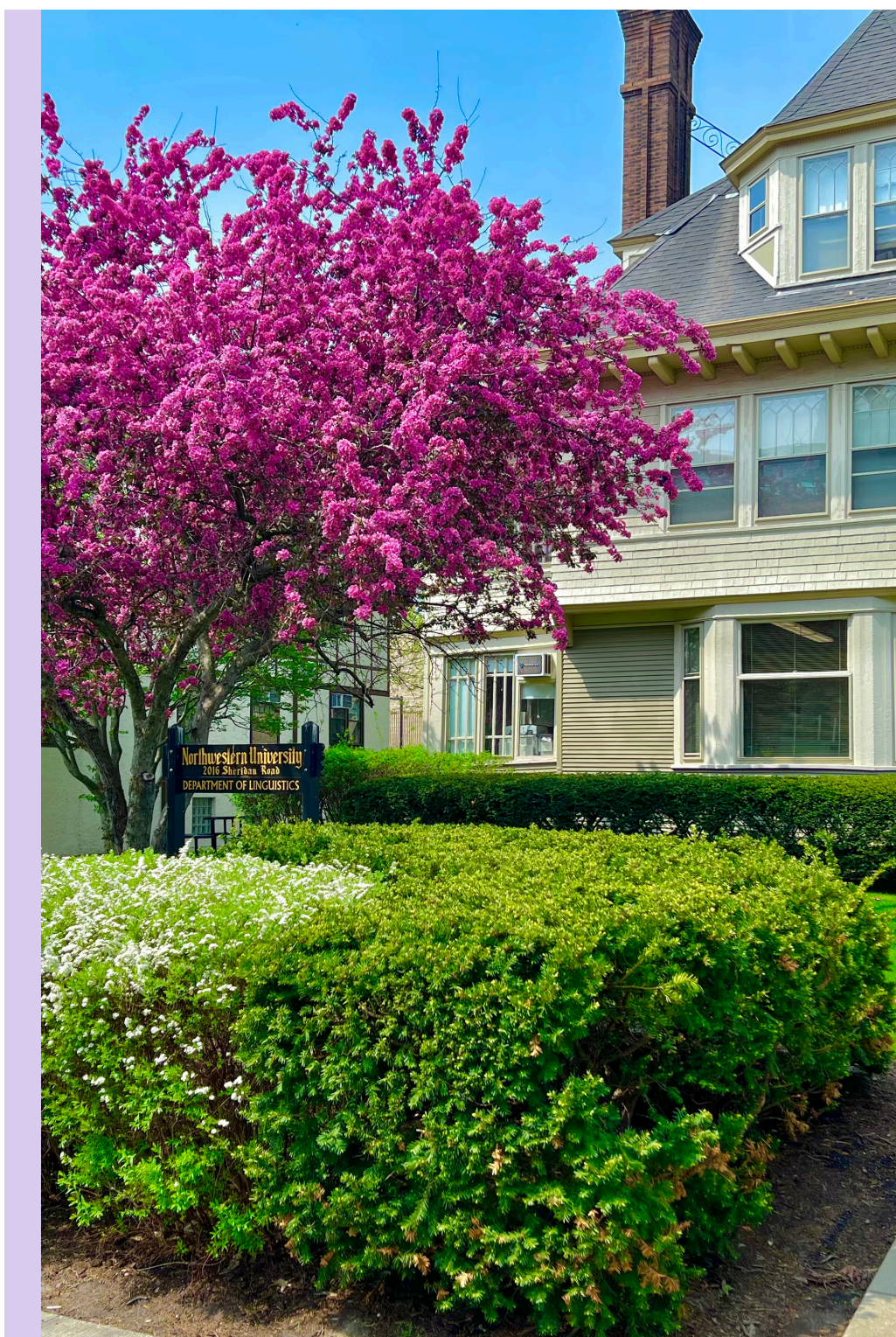


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CHAIR'S WELCOME

Professor Jennifer Cole

Greetings, everyone! Here we are in the beginning weeks of another academic year, and even though we have all been here before, it feels new and exciting each time. This is one of the things I love most about academic life! I delight at the enthusiasm and wonder of our undergraduate students encountering linguistics for the first time and the excited anticipation of our graduate students as they plan and launch new research projects. With cool temperatures and colorful foliage spring feels very far away, yet I find that I am already looking forward to the events that mark the year's end, where we get to hear about the fascinating insights and discoveries from our students' PhD theses and Qualifying Papers.

While we are now unavoidably focused on the year ahead in Linguistics, this newsletter offers a nice opportunity to reflect on the year that just ended. We were sad to say good-bye to Professor Masaya Yoshida, who accepted a new position in Barcelona, Spain at the Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies (ICREA). We wish him well, though we will miss his wry humor and spirited discussions of syntax and linguistic theory in the 21st century. We are also very happy to welcome Charlene Mitchell, who joined the administrative staff of the department as our new Business Coordinator. Though Charlene has been with us less than a year, I can no longer imagine how I ever managed in my role as department chair without her! Her spectacular organizational and administrative skills are matched by her geniality, and her presence alongside our talented Program Assistant, Talant Abdykairov, makes the Linguistics front office a welcoming and supportive place for all.

I hope you read on in this newsletter to meet the three graduate students who have started their PhD journey in our graduate program this Fall. I also invite you to join me and my faculty colleagues in applauding the students who graduated in 2023-2024 with B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Linguistics and congratulating the students whose hard work earned special recognition in the form of a "Best Student Poster" award (to Shawn Foster) and the department's Demoz Prize (to Adam Leif).

Before signing off, I must also mention that recent months have seen the official start of the renovation work on the Jacobs Center, directly across us on Sheridan Road, which will be the home of a new Social Sciences and Global Studies Hub at Northwestern.

The Linguistics Department will have fabulous new office and lab space in the renovated Jacobs Center. The move-in date is tentatively set to Fall 2026, and in the meantime we can enjoy our front-row seats to the building transformation!



EVENTS

PLANNING TO PRODUCE SPEECH WORKSHOP

In September 2023, the Linguistics Department hosted a workshop on the topic of speech production planning. This topic has received considerable attention in a diverse array of approaches to studying language (linguistic, psycholinguistic, computational) from sounds, to sentences, to discourse. In spite of the broad array of scholars interested in this topic, these literatures have seldom made contact with one another. To help break down these barriers, we brought together six scholars from varied backgrounds to discuss these issues. In addition to talks by the invited speakers, there was an opportunity for our students and postdocs to present posters related to this broad topic.

SPEAKERS



Jennifer Arnold, Professor.
University of North Carolina.
Areas of Interest: Cognitive Psychology



Meredith Tamminga, Associate Professor.
University of Pennsylvania.
Areas of Interest: Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Language Change.



Khalil Iskarous, Associate Professor.
University of Southern California.
Areas of Interest: Computational Linguistics, Experimental Methods in Linguistics, Endangered Languages



Jelena Krivokapic, Associate Professor.
University of Michigan.
Areas of Interest: Phonetics and Phonology, Prosody.



John Alderete, Professor.
Simon Fraser University.
Areas of Interest: Language Production



Shota Momma, Assistant Professor.
University of Massachusetts Amherst.
Areas of Interest: Psycholinguistics, Syntax, and the intersection between the two.

“

PROFESSOR JENNIFER COLE:

It's rare to have a forum where linguists who focus on different aspects of language structure and linguistic behavior come together to share perspectives on a broad problem. It was exciting to learn about the many ways researchers are investigating how linguistic messages are planned prior to speaking, and the implications of that research for theories of language from social, cognitive and computational perspectives.

”

EVENTS CONT.

2023-2024 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Professor Ann Bradlow continued to serve as the Faculty Coordinator for the Colloquium Series, which celebrated a successful array of speakers.

“

PROFESSOR ANN BRADLOW:

Our colloquium series continues to provide a forum for keeping up with cutting-edge Linguistics, as well as opportunities for informal interaction at the post-talk receptions. During AY 2023-2024, we hosted seven talks covering a wide range of topics.

”

Ann extends special thanks to the graduate students who worked on the 2023-2024 Colloquium Series: the Event Coordinators Raef Khan and Qingcheng Zeng, and the Receptions Committee Anges Vu and Jingy Wu.

Take a look at the next page to get a sneak peek into the speakers for next year's colloquium!

SPEAKERS



Florian Schwarz, University of Pennsylvania.
Exploring the contrast between weak and strong definite articles experimentally.



Georgia Zellou, UC Davis.
Linguistic and social biases impact speech communication in human-computer interaction.



Lal Zimman, UC Santa Barbara.
Toward an expansive theory of vocal gender: Trans approaches to the sociophonetics of gender.



Kathryn Franich, Harvard U.
Coordination and its Relationship to Acoustic and Articulatory Enhancement.



Jonathan Brennan, University of Michigan.
Grammatical dynamics and neural decoding with EEG.



Meg Cychosz, UCLA.
Harnessing children's messy, naturalistic environments to understand speech development.



Anjalie Field, Johns Hopkins University.
Equity and NLP in High Stakes Domains.

EVENTS CONT.

2024-2025 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Most colloquia talks offer Zoom attendance and/or a recording, and we typically have one to two dozen attendees via Zoom. It is a convenient way to stay connected. Visit our [colloquium series webpage](#) for the Zoom links, or contact the office with any inquiries. The speakers scheduled for this coming year are:

- 11.1.24** Kevin McGowan, University of Kentucky
- 12.6.24** Ethan Kutlu, University of Iowa
- 1.31.25** Mara Breen, Mount Holyoke College
- 3.7.25** Mina Lee, University of Chicago
- 4.11.25** Jesse Harris, UCLA
- 5.30.25** Rachel Weissler, University of Oregon

QP FEST



Faculty at the QP fest.

Pictured from left to right: Professors Yoshida, Ronai, Cole, Voigt, Goldrick, D'Onofrio, Bradlow.

SENIOR SEND-OFF



Professors Erin Leddon and Matt Goldrick celebrate the Class of 2024 undergraduates.

ACADEMIC DIRECTIONS FAIR



Program Assistant Talant Abdykairov and Professor Erin Leddon greet the Class of 2028 undergraduates.

FACULTY NEWS

AWARDS



Professor Ann Bradlow was elected as a Fellow of AAAS in Language and Linguistics, *for distinguished contributions to the field of speech science, particularly for advancing our understanding of how the dynamic interrelationship between talkers and listeners facilitates communication.* The American Association for the Advancement of Science is the world's oldest and largest general science organizations. A voice for science and scientists everywhere, AAAS fulfills its mission to "advance science and serve society" by communicating the value of science to the public, helping governments formulate science policy, promoting advancements in science education and diversity, and

helping scientists develop their careers. Election as a Fellow honors members whose efforts on behalf of the advancement of science or its applications in service to society have distinguished them among their peers and colleagues. Congratulations to Ann!



UPDATES

The Linguistics Department recognizes the many contributions of its former Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Masaya Yoshida. After being at Northwestern University for 16 years, Masaya now is an ICREA Research Professor, Department of Catalan Philology, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Masaya continues to advise his Northwestern Linguistic graduate students remotely.

Our new DGS is Professor Annette D'Onofrio, who is enjoying her new role.



“

PROFESSOR ANNETE D'ONOFRIO:

I'm very happy to be newly taking on the role of Director of Graduate Studies! It's already been a pleasure to watch so many students accomplishing milestones in the department and presenting and publishing work outside of the department over the past year. I look forward to being able to work more closely with graduate students at every stage over the next year and beyond.

”

GRADUATE NEWS

AWARDS

Shawn Foster received the "Best Student Poster" award for his poster titled *Trading Relations in Segmental Cues to Prosodic Prominence* at the Speech Prosody conference in Leiden, The Netherlands. Shawn's advisor is Professor Jennifer Cole.



FIRST YEAR GRAD STUDENTS



Yonglin Huang is a heritage speaker of the Cantonese community, and she is particularly interested in how we perceive the world through languages differently. Her research interest lies in the speech perception of bilinguals, focusing on Cantonese-Chinese bilinguals. Yonglin is also interested in computational linguistics and sociolinguistics.



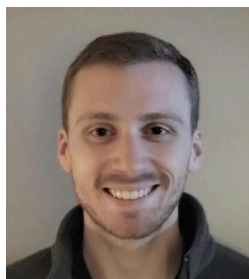
Ruth Bagley is originally from Houston, although she's done a lot of moving. Ruth's background has mainly been in computational linguistics, although she is eager to learn more about sociolinguistics and interaction. For fun, Ruth likes to do puzzles, play piano, and try new and delicious varieties of baked goods.



Mingli Zhou received her Bachelor of Arts in English Language from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, her Master of Arts in Language and Linguistics from Lancaster University, and her Master of Science in Speech and Language Processing from University of Edinburgh.

NEW PHD CANDIDATES

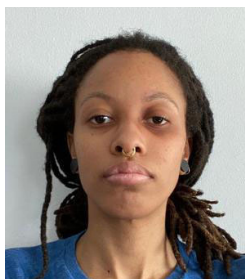
Congratulations to the students who advanced to PhD candidate status after successfully defending their thesis prospectus!



Devin Johnson



Zuheyra Tokac



A.C. Rochelle
Thomas



Michael Dover



Cassie Davenport

GRADUATE NEWS CONT.

DISSERTATION DEFENSES

Kate Sandberg successfully defended her dissertation in June 2024. The dissertation, *The Interpretation of Prosodic Prominence Conveying Contrast and Intensity*, examines the associations between pragmatic meaning categories in English and specific realizations of prosodic prominence. Kate's dissertation committee was Professors Jennifer Cole, Gregory Ward, Eszter Ronai, and Ann Bradlow. Kate currently is a HEOR Fellow in Patient Centered Outcomes Research at AbbVie in Chicago.

Amelia Stecker successfully defended her dissertation in October 2023. The dissertation, *Social Expectations in Linguistic Memory*, explores the social factors that influence linguistic memory as a way to understand how sociolinguistic representations are formed in the mind. Amelia's dissertation advisor was Professor Annette D'Onofrio, and the dissertation committee was Professors Jennifer Cole and Gregory Ward.

RESEARCH TECH NEWSLETTER

We encourage everyone to read the [Linguistics Research Technology Newsletter](#), which is crafted by our Software Developer and Research Staff Chun-Liang Chan. Chun recalls that the newsletter was originally created to enhance communication among department researchers and to provide updates on our lab space protocols, which had been restricted due to COVID-19 in 2021. We have since maintained this tradition.

“



CHUN-LIANG CHAN:

A highlight for me is the student spotlight section where I have the opportunity to interview a student and delve into their research methods as well challenges they've faced along the way. Our students invest countless hours developing unique tools and workflows for their projects, and I hope

that the newsletter serves as a valuable platform for sharing their ideas and achievements across our community.

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GRADUATE NEWS CONT.

QUALIFYING PAPER FEST

Congratulations to the graduate students who presented their Qualifying Papers at QP Fest in June 2024.

QP PRESENTERS



Qingcheng Zeng

Understanding In-domain Social Stereotypes - A Framework with Contextualized Language Models



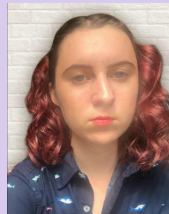
Lynna Neri

Comparing the Perception of the Quality of Support Received when Discussing Mental and Physical Health in Online Communities



Austin Keen

Why who and why? Processing wh-filler-gap-dependencies.



Rebekah Stanhope

Focus alternative set cardinality does not influence prominence perception.



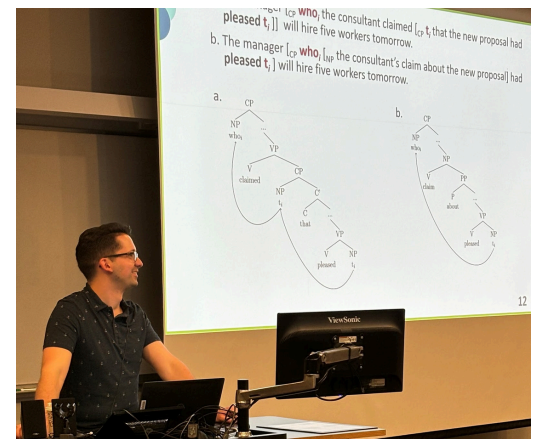
Raef Khan

Do You Have Any Pain?: The Effect of Sociolinguistic Variation on Patient Outcomes



Emma Wilkinson

Style shifting of features tied to racialized identity performance



UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

GRADUATES

Professor Erin Leddon served as our Director of Undergraduate Studies again, and we celebrate that this past year we had almost double the number of Majors and Minors students in Linguistics compared to five years ago!

Congratulations to our students who received a Major or Minor in Linguistics in the Class of 2024:

Benjamin Thomas Abbatiello
Karl Craig Boatright Jr
Micah Quintos Cortezzo
Emma Anne Finkelstein
Yihan Fu
Christine Marie Holtgreive
Caitlin Campbell Hubert

Jason Patrick Jewell
Jacob L Katz
Ryan Jongwon Lee
Adam Sage Leif
Julia Zacharia McMurray
Nathan Cole Ryan



We also recognize the dedication of the Northwestern University Linguistics Student Association (NULSA). Thanks to NULSA, Northwestern was once again selected to be a site for the open round of the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO) in January. Over 1900 students nationwide competed in the open round, 190 of whom advanced to the invitational round, and 12 of whom advanced to compete in the International Linguistics Olympiad held in Brazil. In addition to their important work on NACLO, our students also enjoyed social and networking functions throughout the year.

“

PROFESSOR ERIN M. LEDDON

Our vibrant undergraduate Linguistics community came together this year with several events organized by the Northwestern University Linguistics Student Association (NULSA). Focused on providing opportunities for students to connect with one another, these events also allowed students to explore topics of interest, like how to get involved in Linguistics research. Thank you to our 2023-24 NULSA Co-Presidents Adam Leif and Joy Fu for their outstanding leadership!

”

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS CONT.

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

We are pleased to congratulate our three undergraduate students who received Departmental Honors in Linguistics: Joy Fu, Jacob Katz, and Adam Leif. Each presented their research this past June, at the end of their senior year.

Joy worked with Professors Annette D'Onofrio and Masaya Yoshida. Joy is now pursuing law school at the University of California, Berkeley, and she credits her linguistics coursework for preparing her for legal research. She presented her poster on *Grammatical Illusions in Mandarin Locative Constructions*.

Jacob worked with Professor Rob Voigt, and he graduated Summa Cum Laude. Jacob is now working as a Data Analyst in Chicago. He presented his poster on *Quantifying Script Adherence in Behavioral RCTs with Large Language Models: A Study on Procedural Justice in Policing*.

We congratulate Adam Leif who, in addition to his Departmental Honors for his poster on *Investigating N-Movement in English: Presence and Proposals*, was also awarded the Department's Abraham Demoz Prize. The award recognizes a Linguistics major who demonstrated excellence in coursework and research. Adam's Honors Thesis focused on investigating noun (head) movement in English. While at Northwestern, Adam was advised by Professors Rob Voigt and Masaya Yoshida, both of whom he credits for his decision to pursue his PhD. Adam has begun his PhD studies at UCLA's Department of Linguistics.



Pictured from left to right: Jacob Katz, Adam Leif, and Joy Fu.

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS CONT.

INTERVIEW WITH ADAM LEIF, LINGUISTICS DEMOZ PRIZE WINNER 2024

How did you first become interested in linguistics?

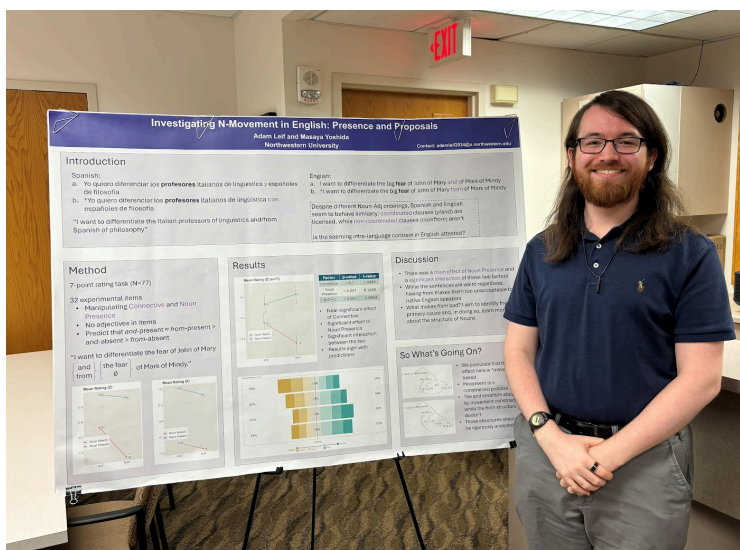
While I was always interested in language, I didn't know that linguistics as a field existed until my sophomore year of high school. For my English class, we had to either pick a book to read from the AP list or get something vetted by the teacher: my mom suggested that I read *The Sparrow* by Mary Doria Russell, whose main character is a field linguist. I was really interested in the scientific and methodical approach to language that the book showed me, and already being computer science minded, thought that getting into AI/NLP could be a cool idea for college. Of course, I haven't exactly done much in the NLP space at this point and am primarily focused on syntax... but still, that's how it started!

What advice would you have for students considering a linguistics major?

I would absolutely encourage anyone who's interested in language or linguistics specifically to consider picking up a linguistics major. All of the faculty, grad students, and my peers have been incredibly warm, helpful, and informative over the last few years. The skills that you pick up from seriously engaging with linguistics can certainly help you in other academic and career-oriented areas - but, beyond that, linguistics has just been plain fun to engage with. Even if you aren't totally sure about it, I'd encourage anyone and everyone to at least try out a class or two: maybe you'll get hooked like I did. Finally, from a practical standpoint, it's not an overwhelming major course-wise, and you can totally fit it in alongside really heavy majors, like I did with my computer science major.

How have you been involved in the Linguistics Department outside of your coursework?

At the end of last year, I became one of the NULSA co-presidents alongside Joy Fu. Otherwise, I was a summer undergraduate research assistant for Prof. Voigt three times, did an independent study with Prof. Yoshida (also at the end of last year), participated in both of their labs, and just recently completed my honors thesis on Nmovement in English.



FACULTY SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Ann Bradlow

- Roy, A., Bradlow, A. R., & Souza, P. (2024). Effect of frequency compression on fricative perception between normal-hearing English and Mandarin listeners," *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 155(6), 3957-3967.
- Chernyak, B. R., Bradlow, A. R., Keshet, J., & Goldrick, M., & (2024). A perceptual similarity space for speech based on self-supervised speech representations. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 155(6), 3915-3929.
- Kim, S-E, Chernyak, B. R., Seleznova, O., Keshet, J., Goldrick, M., & Bradlow, A. R. (2024). Automatic recognition of second language speech-in-noise *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America – Express Letters*, 4, 025204.
- Bradlow, A. R., Bassard, A. M, & Paller, K. A. (2023). Generalized perceptual adaptation to second-language speech: Variability, similarity, and intelligibility. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 154, 1601–1613.

Jennifer Cole

- Steffman, J., Cole, J. 2024. Metrical enhancement in American English nuclear tunes. *Glossa*.
- Iskarous, K., Cole, J., Steffman, J. 2024. A Minimal Dynamical Model of Intonation: Tone contrast, alignment, and scaling of American English pitch accents as emergent properties. *Journal of Phonetics*, 104, 101309.
- Steffman, J., Cole, J., Shattuck-Hufnagel, S. 2024. Intonational categories and continua in American English rising nuclear tunes. *Journal of Phonetics*, 104, 101310.
- Foster, S., Cole, J. 2024. Trading Relations in Segmental Cues to Prosodic Prominence. *Proceedings of Speech Prosody 2024, Leiden*.

Matt Goldrick

- Neveu, A., Goldrick, M., Kleinman, D., Salmon, D. P., & Gollan, T. H. (2024). Revisiting which language declines more in Spanish-English bilinguals with Alzheimer's disease: Longitudinal decline patterns on the Multilingual Naming Test. *Neuropsychologia*, 202, 108948.
- Gavino, M. F., & Goldrick, M. (2024). The perception of code-switched speech in noise. *JASA Express Letters*, 4, 035204.
- Hitczenko, K., Segal, Y., Keshet, J., Goldrick, M., & Mittal, V. A. (2023). Speech characteristics yield important clues about motor function: Speech variability in individuals at clinical high-risk for psychosis. *Schizophrenia*, 9, 60.
- Aly, M., Colunga, E., Crockett, M., Goldrick, M., Gomez, P., Kung, F., McKee, P. C., Pérez, M., Stilwell, S. M., & Diekman, A. (2023). Changing the culture of peer review for a more inclusive and equitable psychological science. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 152, 3546-3565.

FACULTY SELECTED PUBLICATIONS CONT.

Eszter Ronai

- Eszter Ronai & Alexander Göbel. (2024). Watch your tune! On the role of intonation for scalar diversity. *Glossa Psycholinguistics*, 3(1): 26, pp. 1–34.
- Eszter Ronai & Ming Xiang. (2024). Scalar inference calculation through the lens of degree estimates, *Language and Cognition*, 1–26.
- Eszter Ronai & Ming Xiang. (2024) What could have been said? Alternatives and variability in pragmatic inferences. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 136: 104507.
- Helena Aparicio & Eszter Ronai. (2023). Scalar implicature rates vary within and across adjectival scales. In *Proceedings of the 33rd Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference*, pp. 110-130.

Rob Voigt

- Leveraging body-worn camera footage to assess effects of training on officer communication during traffic stops. Nicholas P. Camp*, Rob Voigt*, MarYam G. Hamedani, Dan Jurafsky, and Jennifer L. Eberhardt. 2024. *PNAS Nexus*.
- The Refugee Advantage: English-Language Attainment in the Early Twentieth Century. Ran Abramitzky, Leah Platt Boustan, Peter Catron, Dylan Connor and Rob Voigt. 2023. *Sociological Science*.
- The Language of Bargaining. Mourad Heddaya, Solomon Dworkin, Chenhao Tan, Rob Voigt, and Alexander Zentefis. 2023. *Proceedings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL 2023)*
- Large Language Models Are Partially Primed in Pronoun Interpretation. Suet-Ying Lam, Qingcheng Zeng, Kexun Zhang, Chenyu You and Rob Voigt. 2023. *Findings of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL 2023 Findings)*.

DONORS

Thank you to our recent donors for their generous gifts which support Linguistics student research. New and continuing donations are appreciated, and can be made [here](#).

Dr. Brett E. Blake
Siyu Chen, PhD
Ms. Briana Cara Crowley
Ms. Yihan Fu
Peter J. Gingiss, PhD
Mrs. Christina Revning Hegland
Mr. Paul Hegland
Mrs. Karen L. Hill
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