

# MM6: Methodology of syntactic research

April 22, 2009

<b>Time</b>	Wednesdays, 11:00-13:00
<b>Location</b>	tba
<b>Instructor</b>	Luis Vicente
<b>Contact</b>	<i>vicente@ling.uni-potsdam.de</i>
<b>Where to find me</b>	Haus 35, office 1.03
<b>Office hours</b>	by appointment, but drop-ins are also welcome

## 1 What this course is about

This course will introduce students to the practical and logistic issues behind the empirical part of linguistic research. We will discuss how to gather realistic data sets, and how to apply basic statistical techniques to them, in order to create an accurate picture of the distribution of the data. We will also devote some weeks to one-on-one data elicitation with a speaker of a language that students are unfamiliar with. Finally, there will also be some discussion on how to report research results to the linguistics community.

## 2 Requirements

Students are required to attend the weekly meetings and to do the assigned reading (10% of the final grade). Active class participation is encouraged (20% of the final grade). Besides, students will also do two in-class presentations (each worth 35% of the final grade). For the first one they will have to design an experiment or questionnaire (though not run it to get data), taking into account the discussion in the first weeks of the course. In the second one, they will have to report a consistent set of data that they gathered in the informant sessions. Note that, on top of the oral presentation, the students will have to produce a short written version of their work (5-6 singlespace pages maximum).

### 3 A tentative schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
April 22	Grammaticality judgements	Schütze 1996 ch. 1, Phillips 2008, den Dikken et al 2007
April 29	How to construct an experiment (I)	Kaan & Stowie 2006 (ch. 1 & 3)
May 6	How to construct an experiment (II)	Kaan & Stowie 2006 (ch. 4 through 6)
May 13	Large scale questionnaires	Wurmbrand 2004, Szendrői & Tóth 2004
May 20	How to interpret and present results (I)	Woods et al 1986, Jurka 2009
May 27	How to interpret and present results (II)	Woods et al 1986, Sprouse 2007
June 3	How to interpret and present results (III)	Baayen 2008
June 10	Student presentations	No reading.
June 17	Fieldwork	Vaux & Cooper 1999
June 24	Preparation for informant sessions	Materials on the informant's language.
July 1	Informant session #1	No reading
July 8	Informant session #2	No reading
July 15	Informant session #3	No reading
July 22	Presentation of results	No reading
July 29	Abstract writing	Rooryck & van Heuven 1999, Potts 2008.

### 4 An extended reading list

This is actually more than you are required to read for this course. You should use your good judgement and interest to decide what you want to read beyond the weekly assignments.

- Baayen, R.H. 2008. *Analyzing linguistic data: a practical introduction to linguistics using R*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Bard, Ellen, Dan Robertson, and Antonella Sorace. 1996. Magnitude estimation of linguistic acceptability. *Language* 72, 32-68.
- Cornips, Leonie, and Cecilia Poletto. 2005. On standardising syntactic elicitation techniques (part 1). *Lingua* 115, 939-957.
- Cowart, Wayne. 1997. *Experimental syntax: applying objective methods to sentence judgements*. SAGE publications, Thousand Oaks.
- den Dikken, Marcel. 2007. Questionnaire study on Dutch that-trace effects: stimuli and results. Ms., CUNY Graduate Center.
- den Dikken, Marcel, Judy Bernstein, Christina Tortora, and Raffaella Zanuttini. 2007. Data and grammar: means and individuals.
- Everett, Daniel. 2007. *Linguistic Fieldwork: a student guide*. Ms., Illinois State University.
- Featherston, Sam, and Wolfgang Sternefeld. 2007. *Roots: linguistics in search of its evidential base*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

- Featherston, Sam. 2009. Relax, lean back, and be a linguist. Ms., Universität Tübingen.
- Fults, Scott, and Colin Phillips. 2004. The source of syntactic illusions. 17<sup>th</sup> CUNY Conference.
- Jurka, Johannes. 2009. Extraction out of subjects  $\neq$  extraction out of moved domains: experimental evidence from German. Ms., University of Maryland, College Park.
- Johnson, Keith. 2008. *Quantitative methods in linguistics*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Kaan, Edith, and Laurie Stowe. 2006. *Developing an experiment*. Ms., University of Florida and Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.
- Newman, Paul, and Martha Ratliff. 2001. *Linguistic Fieldwork*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Phillips, Colin. 2008. Should we impeach armchair linguists? *Proceedings of Korean & Japanese Linguistics* 17.
- Potts, Chris. 2008. Abstract writing. Ms., University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Rooryck, Johan, and Vincent van Heuven. 1999. Guidelines for writing abstracts. Ms., Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.
- Schütze, Carson T. 1996. *The empirical base of linguistics: grammaticality judgements and linguistic methodology*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Snyder, William. 2000. An experimental investigation of syntactic satiation effects. *Linguistic Inquiry* 31, 572-582.
- Sprouse, Jon. 2007. *A program for experimental syntax*, PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Szendrői, Kriszta, and Ildikó Tóth. 2004. Hungarian verb clusters: results of a questionnaire survey. In É. Kiss & van Riemsdijk (eds.) *Verb clusters*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam, 87-119.
- Vaux, Bert, and Justin Cooper. 1999. *Introduction to Linguistic Field Methods*. Lincom Europa, München.
- Woods, Anthony, Paul Fletcher, and Arthur Hughes. 1986. *Statistics in language studies*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Wurmbrand, Susi. 2004. Germanic verb clusters: the empirical domain. In É. Kiss & van Riemsdijk (eds.) *Verb clusters*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam, 43-85.