

19th Annual Cornell Undergraduate Linguistics Conference (CULC19)

April 26-27, 2025

Program

Saturday, April 26	
9:45 am - 10:00 am	CHECK-IN & WELCOME
10:00 am - 11:00 am	<p>Invited Speaker: Prof. Meredith Tamminga (University of Pennsylvania) <i>What's in a variable? Linguistic lessons from ING</i></p> <p>The construct of a “sociolinguistic variable” plays a central role in variationist approaches to sociolinguistics. A variable in this sense is often defined informally as “different ways of saying the same thing” — for example, the variable ING involves a choice between pronunciations like <i>workin’</i> and <i>working</i>. But if an English speaker says <i>workin’</i> instead of <i>working</i>, what have they actually chosen? Is it a different way of saying a word? A suffix? A phoneme? In this talk I will ask how we know what kinds of linguistic pieces are involved in any specific case of sociolinguistic variation. With ING as a case study, I will present recent experimental work from my lab and discuss how it compares with corpus data. Finally, I will discuss why we might care about the structure and representation of sociolinguistic variation, aiming to highlight the interconnectedness of sociolinguistic variation with questions about both grammar and psycholinguistics.</p>
11:00 am - 11:10 am	BREAK
11:10 am - 11:40 am	<p>Jyothi Nellakra (Carleton College) <i>Malayalam causatives have two layers of Voice: A reply to Krishnan & Sarma (2023)</i></p>
11:40 am - 12:10 pm	<p>Piper Brown (Carleton College) <i>Every Mandarin sentence is not surface scope: Evidence for inverse scope in heritage and non-heritage speakers</i></p>
12:10 pm - 1:00 pm	LUNCH
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	<p>POSTER SESSION 1</p> <p>Rogayah Alamarie, Max Baker (Syracuse University) <i>The long-term influence of implementing cultures and languages across the curriculum (CLAC) in undergraduate linguistics courses</i></p>

	<p>Nayantara Balagopal Chandrasekhar (Emory University) <i>The 'face' of politeness: Emojis as linguistic indicators of politeness</i></p> <p>David Garsten (Yale University) <i>Giving and screaming: The syntax of vibes</i></p> <p>Kaitlyn Sabb (University of Michigan - Ann Arbor) <i>Phonological contrast in the face of lenition: Investigating /s/ + /b d g/ sequences in Andalusian Spanish</i></p> <p>Zara Shapiro (Cornell University) <i>Language across geopolitical borders: How multilingualism, language vitality, and perception function along the France-Spain border</i></p>
2:00 pm - 2:30 pm	<p>Akinloluwa Ajayi (Obafemi Awolowo University) <i>Low tone raising in Yoruba</i></p>
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	<p>Jacky Xu (Cornell University) <i>Oral epic poetry and phonology: What Kenje Kara's Semetey reveals about stress and syllable structure in Kyrgyz</i></p>

Sunday, April 27	
10:00 am - 10:30 am	<p>Bokai Liu (Cornell University) <i>Relative clauses in Northern Iroquoian languages</i></p>
10:30 am - 11:00 am	<p>Wenjing (Koda) Li (Brown University) <i>Binding in Conjunction</i></p>
11:00 am - 11:30 am	<p>Jimmy Li (Cornell University) <i>Crucial details about Grassmann's Law</i></p>
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	LUNCH
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	<p>POSTER SESSION 2</p> <p>Haley Bowman</p>

	<p>(University at Albany) <i>The relationship between working memory and second language acquisition</i></p> <p>Aaron Lener (Syracuse University) <i>Negation and the left periphery in Jhar</i></p> <p>Emma Montilla, Renee Rubanowitz (University of California, Los Angeles) <i>Musical multilingualism: Constraints and creativity in bilingual songwriting</i></p> <p>Sarah Raman (Carleton College) <i>Towards a quantification of sociolinguistic competence: The case of /l/ deletion in non-native french</i></p> <p>Isabella Rubin (Cornell University) <i>The silent meaning of 'reasonable': Implicature, ambiguity, and power in legal interpretation</i></p>
1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	<p>Xulián Romano (Cornell University) <i>Synthetic Mechanisms of Representation Repair</i></p>
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<p>Invited Speaker: Prof. Jennifer Kuo (Cornell University) <i>How abstract can a UR be? Evidence for limits to abstractness in Maga Rukai</i></p> <p>Morphophonemic learning involves not just learning rules/constraints, but also Underlying Representations (URs), from which surface forms are derived. The more abstract URs are allowed to be (i.e. the more URs are allowed to deviate from surface forms), the more challenging UR learning becomes. A growing body of research, most notably Kiparsky (1968; 1973, et seq.), suggests that there are limits on abstractness. The Maga dialect of Rukai (Austronesian, Taiwan) is suited to addressing this question, because it has a so-called rhythmic syncope alternation that require positing relatively abstract URs. The current project looks at how the Maga syncope pattern has been restructured over time to probe at issues of representational abstractness. I use diachronic change as a window into morphophonological learning; the idea is that acquisition errors can be adopted into speech communities, resulting in diachronic change. To preview results, I find that while learners tolerate some degree of abstractness, there is a strong bias against learning highly abstract URs.</p>