



FREQUENCY EFFECTS IN LANGUAGE

4 DECEMBER 2017

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13:00 – 14:00, AULA C8 Measuring how variations change: A multivariate analysis of *to*-contraction in American English

Language change is often perceived as a competition, that is, one variant becomes more frequent at the expense of another. Yet, very often this cannot be adequately described as a simple, gradual replacement; rather, the determinants of the variation also change. This study demonstrates how such changes can be analyzed as interaction effects in a statistical model, by using 'time' as a moderator variable.

The study offers a diachronic description of *to*-contraction in AmE from a Construction Grammar perspective. While *to*-contraction occurs since the 19th century, three specific forms – *gonna*, *wanna* and *gotta* – become conventional in the 20th century. In this process, their usage patterns become increasingly similar, showing an emerging analogy between variations. Thus, we see a case of how schematicity develops out of idiosyncratic variations.

16:00 – 17:30, AULA C8 Workshop session: Data types and statistics

The workshop session is intended for students and young researchers to get problem-oriented input on data analysis for their projects. Participants are invited to send or bring their specific questions to be addressed in the session.

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Dr. David Lorenz is a graduate of the research training group "Frequency Effects in Language" at the University of Freiburg, Germany. He has worked as a researcher and lecturer in Freiburg and Tartu, Estonia. His main interests are in cognitive linguistics, language variation and change, and quantitative methods of empirical language research. His research focuses on how experience with language use creates and shapes the mental representation of linguistic structure in the mind.