

# Timothy James Leffel

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## FULL-TIME POSITIONS

- 2018– Data Scientist, Social Data Collaboratory and ARC. NORC at the University of Chicago
- 2016–18 Research Scientist, Academic Research Centers (ARC). NORC at the University of Chicago
- 2014–16 Postdoctoral Researcher, Language Processing Lab, Dept. of Linguistics. University of Chicago

## EDUCATION

- 2014 PhD, Linguistics. New York University  
thesis *The semantics of modification: Adjectives, nouns, and order* [lingbuzz]  
advisor Chris Barker
- 2012 Visiting PhD student, Linguistics. Universität Potsdam and SFB 632, Berlin
- 2011 MA, Linguistics. New York University
- 2009 BA with honors, *magna cum laude*, Linguistics/Philosophy. The Ohio State University

## RESEARCH

### Publications

- 2019 Vagueness in implicature: The case of modified adjectives (w/Alexandre Cremers, Nicole Gotzner, Jacopo Romoli). *Journal of Semantics* xx(xx):xx-xx. [link] [preprint] [data+code]
- 2016 Imprecision is pragmatic: Evidence from referential processing (w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang). *Proceedings of SALT 26*. [link]
- 2014 Restrictive versus non-restrictive composition: An MEG study (w/Miriam Lauter, Masha Westerlund, Liina Pyllkkänen). *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience* 29(10):1191–1204. [link]
- 2014 Pronominal F-markers in Basaá (w/Radek Šimík, Marta Wierzba). In Huang, Poole, and Rysling (eds), *Proceedings of NELS 43*, 265–276.
- 2012 Modality and future reference in Masalit. In Marlo et al. (eds), *Selected Proceedings of ACAL 42*, 221–230. [link]
- 2011 English proximal/distal non-deictic demonstratives align with hearer-new/hearer-old information status. *Snippets* 23:9–10. [link]

## Manuscripts

- in rev. Interpreting gradable adjectives in context: Domain distribution vs. scalar representation (w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang).
- in prep. Predicting child language outcomes from parent-reported vocabulary assessments (w/Eileen Graf, Marc Hernandez, Susan True, Lekha Venkataraman).
- 2011 Nonrestrictive adjectives and the theory of scalar implicature. Semantics qualifying paper, NYU.
- 2011 Focus constructions in Masalit. Syntax qualifying paper, NYU.

## Conference presentations (peer-reviewed abstracts)

- 2019 Automated content analysis to quantify theme mentions in e-cigarette and other tobacco coverage across mass media and social media sources (Gibson, Siegel, Kranzler, Volinsky, O'Donnell, Williams, Yang, Kim, Binns, Tran, Maidel Epstein, Leffel, Jeong, Liu, Lee, Emery, Hornik). *The Annual Meeting of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco*, San Francisco, CA. (SRNT, poster)
- 2018 Exploring Juul Promotion Strategies on Instagram: Amount, Sources, and Youth Appeal (Kostygina, Szczyпка, Binns, Kim, Leffel, Tran, Emery, Willett). *National Conference on Health Communication, Marketing, and Media*, CDC, Atlanta, GA. (NCHCMM, talk)
- 2018 Production and comprehension of referential expressions show divergent behavior (w/Ming Xiang, Allison Kramer, Chris Kennedy). *The 31st Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*, University of California, Davis, Davis, CA. (CUNY 31, talk)
- 2017 Predicting low-income children's language outcomes (w/Eileen Graf, Marc Hernandez, Susan True, Lekha Venkataraman). *Many Paths to Language*, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, The Netherlands. (MPaL, talk)
- 2017 Low-SES Parent Perspectives on Early Childhood Care and Education: Direct Reports on Experiences, Expectations, Beliefs and Values (w/Marc Hernandez, Susan True, Eileen Graf, Lekha Venkataraman). *Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development*, Austin, TX. (SRCD 2017, poster)
- 2016 Imprecision is pragmatic: Evidence from referential processing (w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang). *Semantics and Linguistic Theory 26*, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX. (SALT 26, talk)
- 2016 'Not very' Adj: Vagueness and implicature calculation (w/Alexandre Cremers, Jacopo Romoli, Nicole Gotzner). *The 90th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America*, Washington, DC. (LSA 90, talk)
- 2016 Context and world knowledge in gradable adjective interpretation (w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang). *The 90th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America*, Washington, DC. (LSA 90, talk)
- 2014 Restrictive versus non-restrictive composition: An MEG study (w/Miriam Lauter, Masha Westerlund, Liina Pylkkänen). *The 27th Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. (CUNY 27, poster)

- 2012 Information structure and pronominal morphology in Basaá (w/Radek Šimík, Marta Wierzba). *North East Linguistic Society 43*, City University of New York Graduate Center, New York, NY. (NELS 43, poster)
- 2012 Nonrestrictive adjectives and the theory of scalar implicature. *Generative Linguistics in the Old World 35*, Universität Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany. (GLOW 35, poster)
- 2012 Nonrestrictive adjectives and blind implicatures. *Workshop on Semantic and Pragmatic Properties of (Non) restrictivity*. Universität Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany. (SPPNR, talk)
- 2011 Epistemic modality in Masalit. *Annual Conference on African Linguistics 42*. University of Maryland, College Park, MD. (ACAL 42, talk)
- 2010 Term focus in Masalit. *SUNY/Yale/NYU/CUNY Mini-Conference 12*, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY. (SYNC 12, talk)

**Workshops, invited talks, other presentations**

- 2019 Introduction to text classification: Approaches, workflows, and demos. NORC Data Science Brown Bag. (invited) [repo with code, data, and slides]
- 2018 Generalizing the Social Data Explorer’s Similar Words feature with  $n$ -gram embeddings (w/Sherry Emery). NORC Advisory Committee Meeting on Statistics, Machine Learning, and High Performance Computing. (invited)
- 2018 Natural Language Processing: A brief tour of the field with classification and word2vec demos. NORC Data Science Monthly Meeting (March). [slides] [demo code and data repo]
- 2017 Simulation and coefficient decomposition for interpretability of censored (“tobit”) regression models. Brownie Bag at NORC, Academic Research Centers. (department workshop talk)
- 2015 Meaning alternations and kind reference in modified nouns. Michigan State University Linguistics Colloquium, East Lansing, MI. (invited colloquium)
- 2013 A syntactically conservative approach to Bolinger effects. Mid-Atlantic Colloquium of Studies in Meaning 3, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD. (non-refereed workshop)
- 2012 Information structure-related fronting and pronominal morphology in Basaá (w/Paul Roger Bassong, Radek Šimík, Marta Wierzba). 15th Internal Workshop of the SFB 632. Wandlitz, Germany. (internal workshop)
- 2012 ‘Single’ as anti-plural. Universität Potsdam Semantics Colloquium. Potsdam, Germany.
- 2011 Nonrestrictive adjectives and the theory of scalar implicature. Yale University Department of Linguistics Lunch Talk, New Haven, CT. (invited)
- 2010 Continuation semantics for expressives and epithets. Mid-Atlantic Colloquium of Studies in Meaning 1, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. (non-refereed workshop, poster)

## AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2015–16 Some Institutes for Advanced Study (SIAS) Summer Fellow, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (2015) and National Humanities Center, Chapel Hill (2016).
- 2009–14 MacCracken Graduate Fellowship (tuition/fees/stipend), New York University.
- 2012 Research grant for temporary PhD position in the Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) 632. Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Six months of full financial support.
- 2009 Bingham Award for Best Undergraduate Essay in Philosophy, The Ohio State University. Paper: "Should an Intuitionist Accept Church's Thesis?" (cash prize)
- 2009 ASC Excellence in Scholarship Award, The Ohio State University.
- 2004–05 Ohio Post-Secondary Enrollment Options program. Scholarship to enroll in courses at Columbus State Community College during final year of high school. (tuition, fees, textbooks paid)

## TEACHING

### at University of Chicago or NORC

- 2017 Instructor for Introductory Programming with R (NORC).  
Four-week mini-course, Spring.
- 2016 Instructor for Psycholinguistics (Linguistics/Psychology).  
Fall quarter.

### at New York University

- 2013 TA for Linguistics as Cognitive Science.  
Spring semester. Primary instructor: Alec Marantz.
- 2012 TA for Introduction to Semantics, with recitation.  
Fall semester. Primary instructor: Chris Barker.
- 2011 TA for Grammatical Analysis (introductory syntax), with recitation.  
Fall semester. Primary instructor: Mark Baltin.
- 2011 Instructor for Language (introduction to linguistics).  
Summer term. Co-instructor: Luiza Newlin-Lukowicz.
- 2010 TA for Language and Mind (introduction to (psycho)linguistics), with recitation.  
Fall semester. Primary instructors: Alec Marantz and Brian McElree.

### Elsewhere

- 2010 No Child Left Behind tutor in English and Mathematics for NYC Public Schools.  
Summer. New York, NY. (subcontracted through The Academic Advantage, Inc.)
- 2009 Instructor for Conversational ESL, University Settlement.  
Fall. New York, NY. (volunteer)
- 2007 Tutor for Language and Formal Reasoning (LING 280), The Ohio State University.  
Fall quarter. Columbus, OH.

## PART-TIME POSITIONS AND CONSULTING ROLES

- 2017– Technical Advisor, Spaceback Inc.  
>> advise on tech-related problems for an early-stage digital content startup
- 2016– Lecturer in Linguistics, University of Chicago  
>> teach courses in linguistics/psychology when there is a need and I have the time
- 2015–16 Data science intern, Vantage Sports Inc.  
>> analyzed proprietary NBA data; built DFS forecasting models at a sports analytics startup
- 2013–15 Consulting Linguist, Penguin Inc.  
>> developed scientifically-informed reading difficulty metrics for L2 English readers

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2010– Ad hoc referee for various publications  
>> journals: *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience*; *Lingua*; *Journal of Sports Analytics*; *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*  
>> conferences etc.: Sinn und Bedeutung; XPRAG; CLS; SYNC; ACAL Proceedings; NYU WPL
- 2017– Brownie Bag talk series co-organizer (w/Stuart Michaels), NORC at U Chicago
- 2017 Intern selection committee member, NORC at U Chicago
- 2015 Program committee member, Experimental Pragmatics 2015 (XPRAG), U Chicago
- 2014 Organizing committee member, Semantics and Linguistic Theory 24 (SALT), NYU
- 2012–13 NYU Semantics Group talk series coordinator
- 2012 Manuscript editor (p/t contractor), American Journal Experts
- 2011 Co-organizer (w/Neil Myler), The 13th annual SYNC Linguistics Mini-Conference
- 2010–11 Semantics faculty search committee member, New York University
- 2010–11 Linguistics treasurer and representative to NYU Graduate Student Government

## OTHER SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

### Core programming languages and scientific computing stack

- >> Python: pandas, numpy, scikit-learn, keras, nltk, gensim  
>> R: dplyr, ggplot2, lme4, rmarkdown

### Other computing skills

- >> Cloud computing (AWS EC2/S3); (R)markdown; basic web dev.; git(hub); shell scripting; L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

### Language proficiencies

- >> English (native); German (basic verbal); French, Spanish (very basic reading)  
>> Basaa, Masalit (research knowledge)