

Timothy James Leffel

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FULL-TIME POSITIONS

- 2016– Research Scientist, National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago
2014–16 Postdoctoral Researcher, Department 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 and manuscripts under review

- subm. Vagueness in implicature: The case of modified adjectives
(w/Alexandre Cremers, Jacopo Romoli, Nicole Gotzner).
- revising Interpreting gradable adjectives in context: Domain distribution vs. scalar representation
(w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang).
- 2016 Imprecision is pragmatic: Evidence from referential processing (w/Chris Kennedy, Ming Xiang). *The Proceedings of SALT 26*. [link]
- 2014 Restrictive versus non-restrictive composition: An MEG study (w/Miriam Lauter, Masha Westerlund, Liina Pylkkänen). *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 prep. Sub-sentential discourse coherence: Insights from “non-restrictive” attributive adjectives.
- 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)

- 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) [to be presented 3/2018]
- 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

- 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

Programming languages and scientific computing tools

- >> R: core packages include `dplyr`, `ggplot2`, `lme4`, `quanteda`, `rstan`, `shiny`
- >> Python: core libraries include `pandas`, `numpy`, `scipy`, `nlTK`, `spacy`, `scikit-learn`

Other computing skills

- >> Cloud computing (AWS EC2/S3); (R)markdown; basic web dev.; git(hub); shell scripting; \LaTeX

Regularly used algorithms, models, techniques

- >> NLP: naive Bayes; decision trees; LDA; n -gram frequency models; word-embeddings
- >> Regression modeling: OLS, logistic, mixed-effects, censored (“tobit”), Poisson
- >> Bayesian inference: MCMC-driven parameter estimation (with `rstan`, `greta`, and/or `pyMC`)

Language proficiencies

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