

## Call for Papers for **Workshop on Weak Elements in Prosodic Acquisition and Processing**

Organizers: Ulrike Domahs, Angela Grimm, and Mathias Scharinger

In the prosodic hierarchy of stress languages (Nespor & Vogel, 1986/2007), prosodic constituents consist of strong (= prosodically highlighted) and weak (= unstressed) elements. Weak elements have been described as being dependent from strong heads in feet, prosodic words, prosodic phrases or intonational phrases and to lead to global rhythmical patterns of strong-weak alternations (e.g. Liberman & Prince, 1977). However, weak elements have not generally played a major role in acquisition and processing research.

The global view of weak (light) prosodic elements disregards that languages may differ with respect to the type of weak elements they allow for. For example, in many Germanic languages, weak syllables with full vowels (German <Tuba>: /tú**ba**/) contrast systematically with weak syllables containing reduced vowels (<Tube>: /tú**bə**/) or no vowel at all (<Tuben>: /tú**bn**/ ‘tuba’-Plural), while in most Romance languages, syllable reductions are not systematically attested. In addition, weak syllables differ according to their position within a foot or prosodic word, i.e. whether they occur in pretonic (<Gebell> /gə**bél**/, ‘barking’) or posttonic (<Hunde> /hú**ndə**/, ‘dogs’) position. Cross-linguistic studies demonstrated that young children have difficulties to produce weak syllables over a certain period of time (Kehoe & Lleó 2003) and that pretonic, but not posttonic syllables are prone to truncation (<Banane> /ø.ná:.nə/, ‘banana’ e.g. Grimm, 2008). While there is ample evidence that weak elements are challenging for early language learners, only a small number of studies systematically addressed the question how weak elements are processed by different populations and in different linguistic contexts.

Our workshop is thus devoted to the question of how weak elements are processed and acquired. It aims to bring together researchers who investigate weak or reduced prosodic elements at different levels of the prosodic hierarchy, and in different languages. Contributions should study the role of unstressed and weakened elements

- a) for the acquisition of prosodic patterns in first and second language acquisition
- b) for adult language production and perception
- c) for spoken, written or signed language
- d) in regional varieties and different registers of a language

### Confirmed invited speakers:

Katherine Demuth (Macquarie University Sydney, Australia)

Mirjam Ernestus (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

We invite submissions for 20-minute presentations (plus 10-minute discussion).

Abstracts should not exceed 1 page (A4, Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced) and be send in two versions (with and without author’s information). Graphs and references can be included on a second page. Please send your abstract electronically as a PDF to Ulrike Domahs (domahsu@staff.uni-marburg.de).

**Submission deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2020**

The workshop will be part of the 43rd annual meeting of the German Linguistic Society (DGfS) to be held at the University of Freiburg. Presenters will have to register for the conference and are not supposed to present a talk at any of the parallel DGfS workshops, according to the DGfS regulations.

A limited number of travel grants of up to 500 Euro are available for accepted contributions by DGfS members without/with low income.