



**AMSTERDAM CENTER
FOR LANGUAGE AND
COMMUNICATION**

Annual report ACLC
2023



A note from the Director

Dear all,

You will find here our annual report for 2023 in which we offer a snippet of some of the activities that were carried out within our community over the past year. Each academic year is of course a beginning of new initiatives, sometimes involving new colleagues, and a continuation of ongoing projects or activities. In such a perpetual movement which inspires us but oftentimes comes with time pressure, it is really a pleasure for me to see all that we've accomplished, and in particular, the important contributions of all the PhD candidates who graduated or passed their pilot phase successfully. Congratulations to them all! A number of our colleagues were also awarded (collaborative) grants, congratulations to them as well!

I'm proud of what we achieve year after year, and I would like to thank you all for your dedication to making the ACLC an excellent and pleasant research institute engaged in both fundamental research and solving societal questions.

Sincerely yours,

Enoch O. Aboh
Director ACLC

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1. Profile and Societal Relevance

The Amsterdam Centre for Language and Communication (ACLCL) is a world-renowned research and training institute focusing on ***Constraints on Variation in Human Language, Communication, and Cognition***. A unique aspect of the human species is language: it translates our thoughts into communication, while at the same time, it permeates all aspects of culture. As an interface between the human mind and the outer world we engage with and act upon, language can inform us on the mind itself and on how humans ‘see’ the outer world, the societies we live in and the challenges we face. The ACLCL seeks to understand this complex interaction through an integrative and inclusive approach that favours collaboration across competing paradigms and methods in order to develop interdisciplinary solutions for the scientific community and society. Good science, the ACLCL believes, is an endeavour that aims to solve both scientific and societal questions.

As such, the ACLCL is the academic home to a large community of scholars involving PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, as well as faculty. It has its own SpeechLab and a SignLab. Over the years, the ACLCL has remained a major actor in the field of the study of language learning and language uses in their different facets, language technologies, and the implications of these studies in society. In this regard, ACLCL’s scientific and educational policy to bridge fundamental research and societal impact focuses in particular on domains such as multilingualism and communication, second language acquisition and/or language impairment in education, autism, cancer and speech-loss, deafness, sign language in education and society, and persuasive communication. The ACLCL further prides itself for its active and involved PhD community.

The ACLCL is managed through a bottom-up structure. Research within this institute is carried out in thematic Research Groups (RGs). In December 2023, the ACLCL involved 21 different RGs. This number may, however, fluctuate because RGs only exist for the duration of the thematic programs they carry out. ACLCL thematic RGs thus form hubs of collaborative research activities and are the anchoring point of both national and international initiatives. ACLCL’s integrative and collaborative approach is instantiated, for instance, in the RG *Language and Cognition in Argumentation* where neurolinguists and argumentation and rhetoric specialists collaborate to develop new courses, tutorials, internships, and research projects, including how the human mind evaluates arguments in a discussion. Such topics are urgent in a world in which societal choices are debated on online platforms, where actors are subject to algorithmic biases. The coordinators of the RGs form the Advisory Board.



2. Governance

Our current structure includes a Director, an Advisory Board, a Scientific Council, a Coordinator, and an Office Manager. Since September 2019, prof. dr. Enoch O. Aboh has been the director of the ACLC. The ACLC director is also a member of the Research Council (*Onderzoeksraad*) of the faculty. This council consists of the directors of the six Research Schools and the director of the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR). This board develops research policies and ensures their implementation within the Faculty.

The ACLC Advisory Board

The director of the ACLC consults with the ACLC Advisory Board on all important matters. These include research strategy, evaluation of research groups, research proposals, the elaboration of job profiles, and the selection of PhD candidates. This Advisory Board consists of the coordinators of the research groups and a PhD candidate representative elected by the PhD candidates for one academic year, and a Postdoc representative. The ACLC PhD-representatives in 2023 were Heleen de Vries (until September 2023) and Anne-Mieke Thieme (from September 2023). Sybren Spit was appointed as postdoc-representative in 2023. The ACLC organogram can be found in the Appendix.

The Scientific Council

The ACLC has an external committee, the Scientific Council, consisting of three members. This council has the task of advising the ACLC Management and Advisory Board on general questions of policy and quality control. The Scientific Council consists of Prof. Richard Gerrig (Stony Brook University), prof. Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm (Stockholm University) and prof. Bencie Woll (University College London).

The ACLC Office

The ACLC Director is supported by ACLC Coordinator, a role filled by Ava Creemers since April 2022. Together, the ACLC director and coordinator are responsible for the day-to-day management of the research school. The Office Manager is responsible for administrative support. Chantal Olijerhoek held this position until June 2023 after which Dian Hulsebosch took over.

3. Brief summary of activities

Research groups

As of December 2023, a total of 21 research groups exist within the ACLC, as listed below. The research groups focus on specific themes and thereby transcend subfields.

- Comparative (Slavic) Verbal Aspect
- Complexity
- Corpus-based and/or Computational Approaches to Language and Literature (CCALL)
- Crossing Language Borders
- DeepFon
- Deliberate linguistic innovation
- Empirical Foundations of Phonology
- Habituals
- Historical sociolinguistics
- Lab Linguistics
- Language Learning, Literacy, and Multilingualism
- Language and Cognition in Argumentation
- Language in autism
- Lexical restrictions
- Linguistic Variation constrained by Cognition, Acquisition and Social context
- Linguistics for All
- Oncology-Related Communication Disorders
- Persuasive discourse across domains
- Relevance & multimodal communication
- Serial Verb Constructions across Modalities
- SignLab Amsterdam

ACLC-day 2023

During the ACLC-day, ACLC members meet to welcome newly hired staff members, congratulate PhD candidates who passed their 'pilot' phase. Also, new PhD candidates and guest researchers are given the floor to introduce themselves and their projects. This festive moment also offers the opportunity to reflect together on a specific research topic (e.g., open science, lab skills) and interact more across disciplines. In 2023, the ACLC-day took place on 14 April 2023. The program consisted of introductions by newly joined PhDs (Jia Zhangjingwen, Martijn Kingma, Rui Cai, Michaela Watkins, Owen Kapelle, Corrine Foko), UDs (Menno Reijven, Michal Korenar), postdocs (Marloes Oomen, Jasmijn Bosch, Jianan Li), and guest researchers (Nathalia Pereira de Souza Martins, Edson Rosa Francisco de Souza, Natalia Nudga, Lue Huang). In addition, the lab managers of the Lab Linguistics research group introduced themselves (Marloes Roosingh, Ray Pelupessy), and we celebrated the PhD-candidates who have completed their pilots by presenting their first results to the ACLC community during a poster session

(Heleen de Vries, Liberty Notarte Balanquit, Elise van Wonderen). The day was moderated by Heleen de Vries and ended with end with drinks and finger food and a linguistics pub quiz at Brakke Grond.

ACLC-seminars

On Friday afternoons, the ACLC organises a seminar series. During these sessions, researchers from the UvA as well as other (inter)national universities present their work. Research Groups are responsible for the program of the ACLC seminars. The ACLC-seminars in 2023 were:

Date	Speaker (affiliation)	Title
January 27	Marcin Lewinski (ArgLab, NOVA Institute of Philosophy, NOVA University Lisbon)	
February 3	Henrike Jansen (Leiden University)	Implicit elements in an “I’m not stupid” argument
February 10	Tajudeen Mamadou Yacoubou (Rutgers University)	The Phonology of Global Intonation: A Case Study of Ede Chaabe.
February 24	Oksana Konunchuk (guest researcher ACLC)	
March 10	Peter Alexander Kerkhof (Fryske Akademy)	How the Flemish ousted Frisian from Holland.
March 17	Sonja Riesberg (LaCITO CNRS & Universität zu Köln)	Word order and discourse prominence in western Austronesian symmetrical voice languages.
March 24	Astrid de Wit (University of Antwerp)	The present perfective paradox across languages.
March 31	Ivan Yuen (Universität des Saarlandes)	The effect of predictability on the duration of phrase-final syllables and pause.
April 21	Hielke Vriesendorp (Universiteit Utrecht/Fryske Akademy)	Exemplars vs. allophones: the role of lexical frequency and listener experience in sociolinguistic processing.
May 12	Markus Steinbach (University of Goettingen)	Is there anything special about special signs? A cross-modal study of a special class of parts of speech in spoken and sign languages.
May 26	Eva van Lier (ACLC)	Alternation in argument coding across languages: lexical and other factors.
	Tineke Snijders (Tilburg University)	Neural tracking of speech in infants and their later language development.
June 9	Lauren Fonteyn (Meertens Instituut)	Methods of semi-automatic data annotation with contextualized word embeddings.
June 23	Odette Scharenborg (Delft University)	
July 7	Paola Escudero (The MARCS Institute for Brain Behaviour and Development, Western Sydney University)	Nurturing Little Multilingual Minds in Australian and the world: Research program motivation, presentation, evaluation and more.



September 20	Eliane Lorenz (Justus Liebig University Giessen)	Heritage bilingualism – Crosslinguistic influence, advantages, and the effects of linguistic distance.
September 29	Anita Slonimska (Max Planck Institute)	Rethinking communicative efficiency: a new perspective from sign languages.
October 5	Ileana Grama and Jeannette Schaeffer (ACLC)	The Roads to Learning are (Neuro)Diverse: A Sensitive Method to Study Statistical Learning in Autism.
October 20	Eline Visser (University of Oslo)	Linguistic fieldwork: methods, data, and an example study from eastern Indonesia.
November 3	Eleonore Smalle (Ghent University, Tilburg University)	Cognitive development as important piece of the language learning puzzle.
November 16	George Walkden (University of Konstanz)	Adult language acquisition and syntactic change.
November 24	Arianna Careddu (University of Cagliari)	Communicating science through verbal-visual discourse: the role of multimodal metaphors in new media as means to convey complex messages.
November 28	Benjamin Storme (Leiden University)	Is French liaison allophony or allomorphy? Evidence from lexical statistics.
December 1	Jia Zhanjingwen (ACLC)	A Corpus-based Analysis of Multimodal Metaphor in Chinese Mobile Phone TV Commercials.
December 7, 15:00-16:00	Marianna Bolognesi (University of Bologna)	Conceptual concreteness and categorical specificity in word processing and representation.
December 15	Fausto Carcassi (University of Amsterdam, ILLC)	Open-ending cognitive models of pragmatics

The Linguistics Research Fair

The Research Fair is an initiative of ACLC PhDs and provides an opportunity for junior and senior ACLC researchers to present their research/project to (r)MA students of linguistics as well as other faculty of the Department of Literary Studies & Linguistics. In 2023, the Research Fair took place on 17 November from 15:00-17:00. The Research Fair gives a platform to PhD-students, researchers and teachers to present their research to (r)MA and/or BA students (Linguistics/CLC). The purpose of the event is twofold: on the one hand, students can use this platform to get some directions and ideas for their thesis/tutorials, or for a research internship. On the other hand, for faculty this is a great opportunity to present your work and recruit students who can help them with their research by investigating a research question that otherwise they might not have the time to explore, or with practical matters such as collecting and/or sorting data. This collaboration could take the form of a thesis, tutorial or internship.

4. Societal impact

The ACLC encourages collaborations with policy makers as well as practitioners involving, for instance, schools, professionals, parents, and other societal target groups. ACLC accomplishments in this regard can be measured via attendance of ACLC public events (e.g., the SignLab open day), websites developed for practitioners or parents or public policies informed by ACLC research (as was the case with regard to the MIND project). The ACLC takes pride in the visibility and usefulness of its research in society. The school therefore values projects that are commissioned by societal institutions or when research time of faculty members are funded by societal parties. Likewise, the ACLC values fellowships attributed to its members by societal funds (e.g., Niels Stensen Fellowship) as well as awards made to ACLC scholars who won public competitions (e.g., Science battle). Furthermore, the contribution of ACLC scholars who appear in the media (printed, radio or television) is acknowledged and valued.

Based on the inputs we received from colleagues in the context of the *Vlootschouw* (which is by no means exhaustive) we can list a few valorisation activities in 2023 which include:

Popular science publications, reports, and news items

- **Federico Gobbo** published an article in [De Groene Amsterdammer](#) and another one in [Het Parool](#).
- **Mulder, Kimberley** (2023). Ik voel me als de taal waarin ik schrijf. *Vaktaal*, 36 (2/3) p.29.
- **Mulder, Kimberley**, Ten Thije, J., Groothoff, F.C., Naber, K., Hagar, T. & Spee, S. (2023). Meertaligheid en culturele diversiteit vieren. Didactische handvatten voor luistertaal in de klas. *Les*, 41, 225.
- Groothoff, F., Hagar, T., **Mulder, Kimberley**, Naber, K., Spee, S., Sudhoff, S., & ten Thije, J. D. (2023). *How to be inclusive without excluding others?* PUBLIC VERWION FINAL REPORT JUNE 2023.
- **Petra Sleeman and Alla Peeters**: co-editors of the *De Wereld in Taal. Een reis in 40 verhalen* (see [here](#)).

Interviews in the media

Caitlin Meyer was interviewed for the BNNVARA podcast *Alledaagse Vragen* on numeral structure (see [here](#)) and for the US radio show *The world* about the Dutch verb *uitwaaien* (see [here](#)).

Finally, **Liesbeth Zack** participates in the Harvard project "Digging for diversity", studying 73 Harvard - Boston Museum of Fine Arts excavation diaries written in (Egyptian) Arabic in the first half of the 20th century (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

At the moment, the ACLC is thinking of developing a specific webpage for valorisation activities within the institute. In this regard, we encourage everyone to keep the ACLC office informed of their initiatives.



5. New Staff members

In 2023, a few new staff members joined or joined in a new function. **Thom Westveer** joined as Assistant Professor of French linguistics, with a specific focus on the interplay between language and gender. **Riccardo Gioni** joined as an Assistant Professor of Functional Linguistics. **Marloes Oomen** joined the ACLC as an Assistant Professor on the interface between sign language grammar and Artificial Intelligence. Finally, **Jean Wagemans** was appointed full professor of Cognition, Communication, and Argumentation.

6. PhD community and Postdoctoral Researchers

New PhD candidates

In 2023, a total of eight PhD candidates joined the ACLC:

- **Corrine Foko Mokam** joined the ACLC in March of 2023. The title of her project is *Crossing language borders: A quest for the human language capacity in West Africa and Central America* and she is supervised by Enoch Aboh, Felix Ameda, and Maria Carmen Parafita Couto.
- **Sarah der Nederlanden** joined the ACLC in May of 2023. The title of her project is *How Literacy shapes Language Learning in Children* and she is supervised by Sible Andringa, Josje Verhagen, Sybren Spit, and Yesim Sevinc.
- **Bart Siekman** joined the ACLC in May of 2023. The title of his project is *How Literacy Shapes Language Learning* and he is supervised by Sible Andringa, Josje Verhagen, Michal Korenar and Sybren Spit.
- **Golshid Shekoufandeh** joined the ACLC in September of 2023. The title of her project is *Inclusive Automatic Speech Recognition* and she is supervised by Paul Boersma and Antal van den Bosch.
- **Harriet Reynolds** started a new project in September of 2023. The title of her project is *From Disorder to Diversity: Incorporating Autistic Experience into Linguistic Research* and she is supervised by Josje Verhagen and Titia Benders.
- **Mili Gabrovsek Sanders** joined the ACLC in September of 2023. The title of her project is *(Teaching) English as a multilingua franca: Preparing learners for successful communication in multilingual settings* and she is supervised by Sible Andringa and Catherine van Beuningen.
- **André Looijenga** joined the ACLC in September of 2023. The title of his project is *The re-invention of written Frisian* and he is supervised by Arjen Versloot and Simon Halink.
- **Yi Ai** joined the ACLC in November of 2023. The title of her project is *Resolving Ambiguous Pronominal Anaphora in Chinese, Italian and Dutch by L2 and Heritage Speakers* and she is supervised by Petra Sleeman, Suzanne Aalberse, and Enoch Aboh.

Pilots in 2023

In 2023, seven PhD candidates successfully defended their pilot studies:

- **Erik Vellinga**: *Reconstructing Argumentation by Fiction.*
- **Jia Zhangjingwen**: *A Corpus-based Analysis of Multimodal Metaphor in Chinese Mobile Phone TV Commercials.*
- **Martijn Kingma**: *Griene tsies: diphthongisation of /i:/ in West Frisian.*
- **Rui Cai**: *Prosodic Clitics in English-speaking Children's Speech Production – An Acoustic Study.*
- **Elise van Wonderen**: *Learning how to communicate: does exposure to multiple languages promote children's pragmatic abilities? A meta-analytic review.*
- **Owen Kapelle**: *Perceiving colour through a language lens: A scoping review of experimental work on effects of language on colour perception.*
- **Michaela Watkins**: *Standard Seoul Korean and F0 enhancement: Support for the prosodic account.*



PhD defenses in 2023

In 2023, four PhD candidates defended their dissertations:

- **Iris Broedelet:** [Lexical-semantic deficits in developmental language disorder: The role of statistical learning](#) (supervisors: Judith Rispens and Paul Boersma).
- **Darlene Keydeniers:** [Two languages in daycare](#) (supervisors: Folkert Kuiken, Sible Andringa, and Suzanne Aalberse).
- **Henning Radke:** [Multilingualism and mixed-mode communication. Sociolinguistic insights into the German-Namibian diaspora](#) (supervisors: Arjen Versloot and Horst Simon).
- **Jie Fu:** [Metaphor use in aphasia](#) (supervisors: Judith Rispens, Suzanne Aalberse, and Marianna Bolognesi).

Post-doctoral researchers

In 2023, three postdocs joined the ACLC. **Hongmei Fang** joined the ACLC as a postdoc in February 2023, working on a project titled *Answering systems: Typology and miscommunications*. **Jianan Li** joined in March 2023, working on a project titled *The development of pragmatic skills in adolescents*. Finally, **Sybrein Spit** joined the ACLC as a postdoc in May 2023, working on a project titled *How literacy shapes language learning*, within the larger Open Competition project by Sible Andringa.

7. Awarded Research Grants and prizes

The ACLC has demonstrated a strong capacity in acquiring personal and/or collaborative grants. The institute has developed a synergy with the Faculty Grant Team that allows an early identification of the members of the institute who are eligible to various grant schemes, and in collaboration with the AIHR, giving them the necessary support to succeed in their applications. Below are the awarded external grants to ACLC researchers in 2023.

Name	Grant	Budget
Yesim Sevinc	Open Competitie XS	€ 50.000
Beyza Sümer	Open Competitie XS	€ 50.000
Cesko Voeten	Veni	€ 280.000
Judith Rispens (co-applicant)	NWA Onderzoek op Routes door Consortia (NWA-ORC 2022)	€ 373.076
Suzanne Dikker (incoming)	ERC Consolidator	
Aholi So (PI: Suzanne Aalberse)	Mozaïek 2.0	

In addition, **Sible Andringa**, together with team members I. Alferink (University of York, UK), E. Marsden (University of York, UK), and C. Bolibaugh (University of York, UK) was awarded a grant from the NWO Open Science Fund 2023. The title of the project is "Opening Up Research Findings In Applied Linguistics: Consolidating And Extending OASIS".

8. ACLC funds

In 2023, the ACLC strategic budget (“beleidsbudget”) was 25,500 euros.

A part of this budget (€2941) was spent on the reception after ACLC seminars, for which each host has a total of 200 euros available to them. Further social events that were sponsored with the strategic budget were the ACLC day (€1820), team building activities for the PhD and postdoc community within the ACLC, and catering costs for several meetings.

The ACLC further sponsored several visits through the [ACLC Flash Visit grants](#) (700 euro), which allows research groups to invite potential collaborators from the EU to visit the ACLC or visit their university. Because no ACLC Short Visit fellowships (1500 euro) were applied for, which can be used to invite potential collaborators or visit their university to develop/write a specific grant proposal, we awarded an additional four Flash Visit grants in 2023. As of 2024, no more Short Visit fellowships will be offered; instead, the ACLC offers a total of twelve ACLC Flash Visit grants (700 euros) per year. The list of awarded applications can be found below. In addition, the ACLC sponsored several workshops through the available [Sponsoring for Events](#), such as the LANCAR Annotation Workshop, a workshop on Historical Sociolinguistics, and a workshop on qualitative methods in argumentation theory.

The ACLC also contributed funds to valorisation activities. In 2023, the ACLC agreed to contribute 1000 euros to a popular science language book *De wereld in Talen: een reis door tijd en ruimte*. The ACLC also supports the science popularization website [Kennislink](#) (through the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics; LOT) with 2500 euros per year. In 2022, this was paid through a contribution of 7500 euros for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Other expenses included contributions to PhD candidates for publishing their theses in the LOT series.

9. Research Output

A total of 146 works were published by ACLC members in 2023. An analysis of these research outputs in terms of their publication category (where Academic refers to publications aimed at fellow academics; Professional refers to publications aimed at professionals in the public and private sector; and Popular refers to publications aimed at the general public) and the Open Access status of these articles can be found below.

Analysis of Count on Research outputs

Open Access status	2023
Open	84
Embargoed	5
Closed	19
Indeterminate	16
None	22

Analysis of Count on Research outputs

Publication category	2023
Academic	130
Professional	8
Popular	8



Appendix: ACLC Organogram

