

Henrik Discher *Curriculum vitae*

📍 Freie Universität Berlin
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Research interests

Variational pragmatics, variational linguistics and dialectology (synchronic and diachronic), semantics and pragmatics, (historical) sociolinguistics, experimental pragmatics and psycholinguistics, experimental methods and (geo-)statistical modelling

Current position

since 01/2023 Research fellow (Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter) at Freie Universität Berlin, Variational pragmatics of German: Comparing communicative patterns (VariPrag), PIs: Tanja Ackermann, Christa Dürscheid, Stephan Elspaß, & Horst Simon

Previous positions

01/2021 – 09/2022 Research assistant (Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft) at the University of Potsdam, Scales in language processing and acquisition: Semantic and pragmatic contributions to implicature computation (SPA), PI: Nicole Gotzner

06/2020 – 02/2021 Student assistant (Studentische Hilfskraft) at Leibniz-Centre General Linguistics (ZAS), Berlin, Experimental game theory and scalar implicatures: Investigating variation in context and scale type (SIGames 2), PI: Anton Benz

Scholarly visits

06/2024 Research stay at the University of Marburg, Research Center Deutscher Sprachatlas (DSA), hosted by Matthias Hahn & Alfred Lameli, 06-28 June 2024

Education

since 04/2023 Dr. phil. in Linguistics, Freie Universität Berlin

04/2020 – 09/2022 M.A. in Linguistics, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, final grade: 1.1

10/2016 – 02/2020 B.A. in German Studies & Mathematics, Freie Universität Berlin, final grade: 1.2

Summer schools

09/2024 8th Statistical Methods for Linguistics and Psychology (SMLP), University of Potsdam, 09-13 September 2024

07/2022 – 08/2022 Eastern Generative Grammar (EGG), Masaryk University Brno, 25 July-05 August 2022

Theses

- *Pragmatic variation of requests, complaints, and assertions in German: (Geo-)statistical modeling of politeness-sensitive speech acts*, PhD thesis (in preparation), Freie Universität Berlin, supervised by Tanja Ackermann & Horst Simon

- *Pragmatic inferences of gradable adjectives in German: The effect of scale structure, polarity, and negation on the interpretation of absolute and relative adjectives*, M.A. thesis, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, supervised by Berit Gehrke & Nicole Gotzner
- *Das Berlinische und seine Verbreitung: Eine Merkmalanalyse des Berliner Sprachgebrauchs um 1880 am Beispiel historischer Wenkerbogen*, B.A. thesis, Freie Universität Berlin, supervised by Klaas-Hinrich Ehlers & Horst Simon

Peer-reviewed papers, conference proceedings and other work

- Zoske, Janel, Henrik Discher, Laura Fischlhammer, & Sabrina Guhe. In preparation. Standard language in Austria: Pragmatic variation in formal contexts and situations. In Alexandra N. Lenz, Stephan Elspaß, Stefan M. Newerkla, & Gerhard Budin (eds.), *German in Austria: Variation – contact – perception*.
- Discher, Henrik & Janel Zoske. 2023. Variationspragmatik: Bericht zur Tagung der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Linguistische Pragmatik (ALP e.V.) an der Universität zu Köln am 07. März 2023. *Zeitschrift für Germanistische Linguistik* 51(3), 551-560. <https://doi.org/10.1515/zgl-2023-2026>
- Alexandropoulou, Stavroula, Henrik Discher, Marisha Herb, & Nicole Gotzner. 2022. Incremental pragmatic interpretation of gradable adjectives: The role of standards of comparison. *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT)* 32, 481-497. <https://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v1i0.5399>

Conference presentations and colloquium talks

Accepted

- *(Im)politeness in Germany: Regional variation of request and complaint strategies*. 19th International Pragmatics Conference (IPrA), University of Queensland, Brisbane, 22-27 June 2025
- *You're a true Vulgarian, aren't you? Inter-speaker variation in the use of expressivity in German complaints* [with Tanja Ackermann]. 47th Annual Meeting of the German Linguistics Society (DGfS), Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, 04-07 March 2025

2024

- *Explicitness of requests and complaints in German: Theoretical considerations and (geo)statistical modeling*. Research colloquium on German linguistics, Bielefeld University, 27 November 2024
- „Ähm, Diggi, der Vier-Euro-Schein wurde noch nicht erfunden“: *Pragmatische Variation von Beschwerden im Deutschen*. Colloquium of the linguistics research groups at TU Dortmund University (Christian Zimmer), University of Bielefeld (Tanja Ackermann), & University of Duisburg-Essen (Melitta Gillmann), Datteln, 13-15 August 2024
- *Variational pragmatics of German: The effect of 'region' and other micro- and macro-social factors* [with Janel Zoske, Tanja Ackermann, & Horst Simon]. 12th International Conference on Language Variation in Europe (ICLaVE|12), Austrian Academy of Sciences & University of Vienna, 08-11 July 2024
- *Pragmatische Variation im deutschsprachigen Raum: Regionale Unterschiede in der Realisierung von höflichkeitssensitiven Sprechakten*. Colloquium of the Research Center Deutscher Sprachatlas & Institut für Germanistische Sprachwissenschaft, University of Marburg, 26 June 2024
- *Pragmatische Variation von höflichkeitssensitiven Sprechakten: Die Faktoren 'Region' und 'Nation' in der geostatistischen Analyse*. Research colloquium on German linguistics (FoGeL), Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, 11 June 2024

2023

- *Wen befragen wir? Auswirkungen von (sprachlicher) Mobilität für die Untersuchung von regionaler Sprachvariation* [with Janel Zoske]. Colloquium by Ferdinand von Mengden, Freie Universität Berlin, 29 November 2023

- *Wie können wir linguistische Mobilität messen? Herangehensweisen und Herausforderungen* [with Janel Zoske]. Colloquium of the linguistics research groups at TU Dortmund University (Ulrike Freywald), University of Münster (Antje Dammel), University of Osnabrück (Sophie Ellsäßer), & Freie Universität Berlin (Horst Simon), Oerlinghausen, 10-12 November 2023
- *The impact of the factors 'nation' and 'region' on pragmatic variation in pluricentric German: First results* [with Tanja Ackermann]. 18th International Pragmatics Conference (IPrA), Université Libre de Bruxelles, 09-14 July 2023
- *Zwischen Sprachproduktion und -reflexion. Discourse Completion Tasks, Adequacy Ratings und linguistische Feldforschung als variantenpragmatische Untersuchungsmethoden* [with Janel Zoske]. Workshop "Methoden der variationellen Pragmatik und historischen Soziolinguistik", Freie Universität Berlin, 26-27 June 2023

2022

- *Pragmatische Inferenzen in Deutsch und Englisch: Interpretation von absoluten und relativen Adjektiven im Sprachvergleich*. Colloquium by Ferdinand von Mengden, Freie Universität Berlin, 14 December 2022
- *Warum bedeutet nicht gut nicht schlecht? Pragmatische Inferenzen von graduierbaren Adjektiven im Deutschen*. Colloquium on German grammar by Christian Zimmer, Freie Universität Berlin, 30 November 2022
- *Incremental processing of scalar inferences of adjectives: The role of comparison standards* [with Stavroula Alexandropoulou, Marisha Herb, & Nicole Gotzner]. 9th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (XPRAG), IUSS Pavia, 22-23 September 2022
- *Incremental pragmatic interpretation of gradable adjectives: The role of standards of comparison* [with Stavroula Alexandropoulou, Marisha Herb, & Nicole Gotzner]. 32nd Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT), El Colegio de México, Mexico City, 08-10 June 2022
- *Incremental processing of scalar implicatures of adjectives: The role of lexical semantics* [with Stavroula Alexandropoulou, Marisha Herb, & Nicole Gotzner]. 42nd Annual Meeting of the Department of Linguistics (AMGL), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 06-08 May 2022
- *Scale structure and negation: Inferences of gradable adjectives in German*. Syntax and semantics colloquium by Stefan Müller & Elisabeth Verhoeven, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 26 April 2022

2021

- *Measure phrases as modifiers of negative adjectives*. 70th Studentische Tagung Sprachwissenschaft (StuTS), University of Vienna, 17-21 November 2021

Public outreach

- *Essen und Höflichkeit: Regionale Variation von kommunikativen Routinen* [with Janel Zoske]. Lange Nacht der Wissenschaften, Freie Universität Berlin, 17 June 2023

Teaching

11/2024	Substitute teaching, <i>Kulturelles im Dialekt</i> (lecturer: Horst Simon), seminar, B.A. Language & Society, Freie Universität Berlin, 26 November 2024
10/2023 – 02/2024	<i>Sprachwissenschaftliche Fragestellungen und Methoden</i> , basic course, B.A. German Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, winter term 2023/24
07/2023	Substitute teaching, <i>Sprachwandel</i> (lecturer: Horst Simon), seminar, B.A. German studies, Freie Universität Berlin, 04 July 2023
05/2023	Guest lecture, <i>Psychosemantics</i> (lecturer: Nicole Gotzner), seminar, B.Sc. and M.Sc. Cognitive Science, University of Osnabrück, 16 May 2023

Workshop organization

- *Geographical Contrast in Variational Pragmatics (GeoContrast)* [with Tanja Ackermann, Anne Schröder, Pawel Sickinger, Horst Simon, & Janel Zoske], Bielefeld University, 30 July – 01 August 2025
- *Methoden der variationellen Pragmatik und historischen Soziolinguistik* [with Tanja Ackermann, Horst Simon, & Janel Zoske], Freie Universität Berlin, 26-27 June 2023
- *9th Linguistik Meetup Berlin-Brandenburg (LMBB)* [mit Patrick Auhagen, Helen Besel, Luisa Kalvelage, Radim Lacina, & Johanna Pott], University of Potsdam, 29 September 2022

Skills

<i>Languages</i>	German (native), English (C1), French (B2)
<i>Coding</i>	R, Python, HTML, JavaScript
<i>Experimental tools</i>	PClbex, ScoSci Survey
<i>Annotating tools</i>	Praat, MAXQDA, EXMARaLDA, ANNIS

Membership

- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft (DGfS)
- International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)

References

Horst Simon	Tanja Ackermann	Nicole Gotzner
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Berlin, 05 December 2024