

THOMAS SOSTARICS

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Department of Linguistics
Northwestern University

EDUCATION

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

Ph.D., Linguistics

Jun 2025

Thesis: Structured Variation in Intonational Form and Interpretation in American English

Committee: Jennifer Cole (chair), Gregory Ward, Eszter Ronai

M.A., Linguistics

Jan 2023

Data Science Fellow, Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems

Sep 2019 - Present

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

B.A. Linguistics

Jun 2018

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Phonetics; Phonology; Prosody; Pragmatics; Intonational Meaning; Psycholinguistics; Data Science

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

- 2024 Walenski, M., **Sostarics, T.**, Mesulam, M. M., & Thompson, C. K. (2024). The production of adjectives in narratives by individuals with primary progressive aphasia. *Journal of Neurolinguistics*, 69, 101179. doi:10.1016/j.jneuroling.2023.101179

Conference Proceedings

- 2025 Iskarous, K., **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (accepted). The dynamical structure of the nuclear tune: The phrase accent. In *Proc. 3rd international conference on tone and intonation (TAI)*
- 2025 Stanhope, R., **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (accepted). F0 correlates of perceived speaker surprise in American English: Accents vs. Edge Tones. In *Proc. 3rd international conference on tone and intonation (TAI)*
- 2024 Sostarics, T., & Cole, J. (2024). PitchMendR: A Tool for the Diagnosis and Treatment of F0 Irregularities. In *Proc. speech prosody 2024* (pp. 289–293). doi:10.21437/SpeechProsody.2024-59
- 2024 **Sostarics, T.**, Ronai, E., & Cole, J. (2025). Relating scalar inference and alternative activation: A view from the rise-fall-rise tune in american english. In *Proceedings of experiments in linguistic meaning 3* (pp. 383–394). doi:10.3765/elm.3.5768
- 2023 **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). Pitch Accent Variation and the Interpretation of Rising and Falling Intonation in American English. In *Proc. INTERSPEECH 2023* (pp. 97–101). doi:10.21437/Interspeech.2023-315
- 2023 **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). Testing the Locus of Speech-Act Meaning in English Intonation. In R. Skarnitzl & J. Volín (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences* (pp. 1240–1244). Guarant International
- 2021 **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2021). Epistemic Meaning and the LLL Tune in American English. In *Proc. 1st international conference on tone and intonation (tai)* (pp. 11–15). doi:10.21437/TAI.2021-3

PRESENTATIONS

Refereed Conference Presentations

(\circ =oral, ∇ =poster. Filled=presenting author.)

- 2025 \circ Iskarous, K., **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2025). *The dynamical structure of the nuclear tune: The phrase accent*. Oral presentation at the 3rd International Conference on Tone and Intonation (TAI).
- 2025 \circ Stanhope, R., **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2025). *F0 correlates of perceived speaker surprise in American English: Accents vs. Edge Tones*. Oral presentation at the 3rd International Conference on Tone and Intonation (TAI).
- 2024 \circ Cole, J., & **Sostarics, T.** (2024). *In Search of the Phrase Accent: Nuclear Tunes in Mainstream American English*. Oral presentation at the 29th Mid-Continental Conference on Phonetics and Phonology.
- 2024 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2024). *PitchMendR: A tool for the diagnosis and treatment of F0 tracking errors*. Poster presentation at Speech Prosody 2024. doi:10.21437/SpeechProsody.2024-59
- 2024 ∇ Cole, J., Sandberg, K., **Sostarics, T.**, Stanhope, R., & Ronai, E. (2024). *Intonation and its meaning: Beyond essential differences*. Poster presentation at Intonation at the Crossroads (CROSSIN) Workshop, Speech Prosody 2024
- 2024 \circ Iskarous, K., Cole, J., & **Sostarics, T.** (2024). *Intonational tunes as compositional, but also autonomous, dynamical objects*. Oral presentation at Variance and invariance in phonological representation: Insights from articulation workshop, Laboratory Phonology 19
- 2024 \bullet **Sostarics, T.**, Ronai, E., & Cole, J. (2024). *Relating scalar inference and alternative activation: A view from the rise-fall-rise tune in american english*. Oral presentation at Experiments in Linguistic Meaning 3.
- 2023 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). *Accommodation of rising and falling intonation in american english*. Poster presentation at the 28th Mid-Continental Conference on Phonetics and Phonology.
- 2023 \bullet **Sostarics, T.**, Ronai, E., & Cole, J. (2023). *Scalar inference and rise-fall-rise in american english: Towards a priming perspective*. Oral presentation at the Voices in Contexts workshop at The University of Cologne, Oct 12-13 2023.
- 2023 \bullet **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). *Pitch Accent Variation and the Interpretation of Rising and Falling Intonation in American English*. Oral presentation at Interspeech 2023. doi:10.21437/Interspeech.2023-315
- 2023 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). *Testing the Locus of Speech-Act Meaning in English Intonation*. Poster presentation at International Congress of the Phonetic Sciences 2023
- 2023 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2023). Tonal center of gravity predicts variation in the interpretation of rising and falling intonation in American English. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 153(3_supplement), A78–A78. Poster presentation at 184th Acoustical Society of America. **1st Place Best Paper in Speech Communication Award**. doi:10.1121/10.0018225
- 2022 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2022). *Exploring the voice quality of nuclear tunes*. Poster presentation at the 27th Mid-Continental Conference on Phonetics and Phonology.
- 2022 \bullet **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2022). *What listeners can tell us about epistemic meaning and the LLL tune in american english*. Oral presentation at 96th Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Society of America.
- 2021 ∇ **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2021). *Epistemic meaning and the LLL tune in american english*. Poster presentation at 1st International Conference on Tone and Intonation.
- 2021 \bullet **Sostarics, T.**, & Cole, J. (2021). *Assessing contrasts in intonation through contrasts in speaker commitment*. Oral presentation at the 26th Mid-Continental Conference on Phonetics and Phonology.

- 2020[▼] **Sostarics, T.**, Walenski, M., Mesulam, M., & Thompson, C. (2020). *Adjective use by individuals with agrammatic primary progressive aphasia*. Poster presentation at Society for the Neurobiology of Language 2020.
- 2020[●] **Sostarics, T.**, Walenski, M., Mesulam, M., & Thompson, C. (2020). *Adjective use by individuals with agrammatic primary progressive aphasia*. Oral presentation at Academy of Aphasia 2020.
- 2019[▽] Arkhipova, L., **Sostarics, T.**, Law, R., Xiang, M., & WingYee, C. (2019). *‘Nonetheless’ can reverse predictions immediately: Evidence from ERPs*. Poster presentation at AMLAP 2019

Invited Talks

- 2023 **Sostarics, T.** (2023). *Priming perspectives on pitch accents and rise-fall-rise*. Seminar in Semantics/Pragmatics. The University of Chicago, Apr 12 2023.
- 2023 **Sostarics, T.** (2023). *Pitch Accent Variation and the Interpretation of Rising Declaratives*. Phonatics. Northwestern University, Mar 29 2023.
- 2021 **Sostarics, T.** (2021). *Pragmatic contributions of the L*L-L% contour in american english*. Language Evolution, Acquisition, and Processing Workshop. The University of Chicago, Feb 19 2023.

Public Outreach

- 2022 **Sostarics, T.** (2022). *Understanding how it’s said: Speech and its melodies*. Taste of Science. Chicago, IL, Sep 12 2022.

OPEN-SOURCE SOFTWARE

contrastable: R package for setting contrast matrices for categorical factors in regression analyses. Available on CRAN: CRAN.R-project.org/package=contrastable.

PitchMendR: A Shiny app written in R that provides a GUI to interactively annotate and correct time-series data. Available at: github.com/tsostarics/PitchMendR.

GUEST LECTURES AND WORKSHOPS

Guest Lectures

	Term	Year
Introduction to Intonational Meaning	<i>Experimental Pragmatics</i>	W 2023
Praat for Prosody Research	<i>Graduate Prosody Seminar</i>	W 2023
NLP Applications for Intonational Meaning	<i>Graduate Prosody Seminar</i>	W 2023
Introduction to Praat	<i>Introduction to Laboratory Phonology</i>	F 2020
Phonological Perspectives on Aphasia	<i>Introduction to Laboratory Phonology</i>	F 2020

Workshops

Understanding Ordinal Models for Rating Data	<i>Linguistics Noon Colloquium</i>	2024
Introduction to R	<i>Cognitive Science Workshops</i>	2023
Conferences and Poster Presentations	<i>Cognitive Science Workshops</i>	2023
Structure of Experimental Papers	<i>Cognitive Science Workshops</i>	2023
Presentation Skills and Slide Design	<i>Cognitive Science Workshops</i>	2023
Applying to Graduate Programs in Cognitive Science	<i>Cognitive Science Workshops</i>	2023
Data Visualization in R	<i>Linguistics Noon Colloquium</i>	2023
Introduction to Simulations	<i>Prosody and Speech Dynamics Lab</i>	2022
Contrast Coding for Categorical Variables	<i>Linguistics Noon Colloquium</i>	2022
Introduction to Ordinal Regression	<i>Prosody and Speech Dynamics Lab</i>	2021
Stimulist: A Package for Counterbalancing Experiments	<i>Data Science Research Sessions</i>	2021
Introduction to L ^A T _E X	<i>Linguistics Noon Colloquium</i>	2021
Student Resources at Northwestern	<i>Linguistics Summer Workshop Series</i>	2020
Introduction to Version Control	<i>Linguistics Summer Workshop Series</i>	2020

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS

International Phonetics Association

(€180) IPA Student Award (for Speech Prosody 2024) May 2024

Acoustical Society of America

(\$250) 1st Place Best Paper in Speech Communication at 2023 Annual Meeting May 2023

Northwestern University

(\$2077) Graduate Research Grant, Dept. of Linguistics December 2023

(\$2970) Graduate Research Grant, The Graduate School December 2022

(\$490) Graduate Research Grant, Dept. of Linguistics October 2022

(\$435) Graduate Research Grant, Dept. of Linguistics October 2022

(\$12,500) Data Science Fellowship, Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems September 2019

University of Chicago

(\$500) Sapir Scholar Award March 2018

(\$500) Sapir Scholar Award January 2018

United Services Automobile Association (USAA)

(\$1500) Air Force ROTC Scholarship Award November 2016

APPOINTMENTS & EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant

2020 – 2023

Department of Linguistics

Northwestern University

- Experimental Pragmatics (with E. Ronai) Winter 2023
- Introduction to Computational Linguistics (with R. Voigt) Fall 2021
- Introduction to Programming and Text Processing for Linguists (with R. Voigt) Winter 2021
- Introduction to Laboratory Phonology (with J. Cole) Fall 2020

English Instructor

2021 – 2022

English Language Programs

Northwestern University

Volunteer Analyst

2019 – 2022

Aphasia and Neurolinguistics Research Lab

Northwestern University

Research Assistant

2018 – 2019

Language Processing Lab

The University of Chicago

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP ROLES

Northwestern University, Dept. of Linguistics

Cognitive Science Professional Development Workshop Facilitator 2023

Graduate Student Liaison 2022 – 2023

Admissions Committee Member 2020 – 2022

University of Chicago

Assistant Residential Director, Summer Session 2018 – 2019

Volunteer Instructor, SPLASH! at UChicago 2018

Resident Assistant, Housing and Residence Life 2016 – 2018

Resident Assistant, Chicago Academic Achievement Program 2017

Illinois Institute of Technology, Air Force ROTC Detachment 195

Cadet Wing Inspector General Fall 2017

Physical Fitness Officer Spring 2017

Big Event Planner 2016 – 2017

Webmaster 2016 – 2017

Flight Commander Fall 2016

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Kellogg School of Management

Summer 2023

Business Management for Scientists and Engineers (certificate)

University of Potsdam

August 2021

Summer School on Statistical Methods for Linguistics and Psychology: Introduction to Bayesian Data Analysis

University of Chicago

Spring 2021

Traveling Scholar: Cue Integration in Language Processing

SKILLS OVERVIEW

Statistics: Regression, classification, ordinal data, Bayesian modeling, FPCA, signal processing

R Expertise: Package development, reproducible workflows, RMarkdown, tidyverse, Shiny

Data Science: Project management, documentation, automation, tooling, experimental design

Interpersonal: Mentoring, teaching, collaboration, adaptability, communication, presentation skills

Graphic Design: Data visualization and communication, ggplot2, Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator

Other Technologies: Python, SQL, C++, JavaScript, bash scripting, git, Qualtrics