Advertisement of a Vacancy at Saarland University

At the Collaborative Research Center (RCR) SFB 1102/A3, the following position is vacant:

**Job Offer:** Scientific Assistant (m/f)

**Place of Employment:** Saarbruecken, Germany

**Date of Employment:** as soon as possible

**Volume of Employment:** part time employment - 65%

**Duration of Employment:** until June 2022

**Position Description:**

A PhD-position is available in the project A3 that is part of the DFG-funded Collaborative Research Center "Information Density and Linguistic Encoding" (SFB1102), which includes 16 research projects in the areas of computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, and theoretical linguistics. The overall goal of the project A3 is to improve automatic text comprehension and production methods, by connecting information provided by a linguistic utterance to world knowledge (and more specifically, in the context of this project, knowledge about prototypical event sequences, also known as "scripts").

The experimental part of the project will investigate what events experimental subjects infer from a story, and which events can be left out without making the story seem incoherent. Furthermore, we aim to investigate under which circumstances the mention of redundant utterances elicits pragmatic inferences. A central modelling goal of the PhD project is to build a rational speech act (RSA) model that scales to such real-world contexts. In order to achieve this, we will build upon our wide-coverage models of script knowledge, which are available from the first phase of the project, and will be further developed by the other PhD students on A3.

The focus of this PhD project will hence be on experimental pragmatics and computational modelling using the rational speech act theory: what inferences are triggered by uttering redundant (inferable) materials? How can we distinguish redundant materials that trigger inferences from those that don’t? Do inferences triggered by redundant material cause processing difficulty, and how can we measure this processing difficulty? What consequences does this have for computational models of pragmatics? The opportunity to own academic training will be given.

For questions on more project details, please contact Vera Demberg at vera@coli.uni-saarland.de

(Note that while the position requires an MSc, we are happy to receive applications by people who have not yet finished their MSc by the time of application, but will have submitted their thesis by the starting date or shortly thereafter)

**Conditions for Employment:**

**Mandatory conditions for employment are:**

Master of Science in psycholinguistics, linguistics, computational linguistics, or a related discipline.

**Applicants with the qualifications noted below will be preferred:**

Experience in experimental methodology and statistical analysis is expected. Background knowledge and interest in pragmatics is desired. Fluent English.

Work contract and salary will accord to the respective collective agreement, i.e. TV-L.

Saarland University aims to increase the number of women in this field. Therefore, women are encouraged to apply for this position.

Physically handicapped persons will be preferred in case equally qualified.

Please refer to reference W1561 in your application. Closing date for applications is December 11th 2018. Applicants are requested to submit their application, together with an academic CV, a list of academic publications, copies of academic degree certificates and two potential references, in electronic form (.pdf / single file) to the following email-address: vera@coli.uni-saarland.de.
Saarbrücken, 27.11.2018