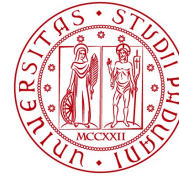




DIPARTIMENTO DI PSICOLOGIA DELLO
SVILUPPO E DELLA SOCIALIZZAZIONE



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Sede

Via Venezia, 8
35131 Padova
tel. +39049 8276506
dipartimento.dpss@pec.unipd.it
www.dpss.unipd.it
CF 80006480281
P.IVA 00742430283

fax +39049 8276547

FUNDED PHD CANDIDATES POSITION on:

Profile 1-The impact of accented speech on language prediction

Profile 2-The impact of foreign-accented speech on thinking, judgment and decision-making

at the Dipartimento di Psicologia dello Sviluppo e della Socializzazione, University of Padova

1- INFORMATION ABOUT THE POSITION

Position: PhD student

Number of vacancies: 2

Project: **Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON) Doctoral Networks, ‘Bridging Communication Gaps in Human and Human-AI Interactions: The Role of Accented Speech on Neurocognitive mechanisms and Social Dynamics’ (HUM.AI.N-ACCENT)**

Location: Padova (Italy)

Research Fields:

Profile 1 - Cognitive Neuroscience

Profile 2 - Cognitive Psychology

Type of contract/Duration of Contract : 3 years

Job Status: Full-time

Hours per week: 36

Starting date: Between 01/01/2026 and 01/03/2026

Application deadline: 20/10/2025

Information about the project: Two PhD positions are available in the Dipartimento di Psicologia dello Sviluppo e della Socializzazione (DPSS) at the University of Padova (Italy).

Profile 1 - The successful candidate will perform research to explore to what extent speech features such as accent or other speaker's specific phonological information, are used to predict upcoming words. Research methods will include EEG measures to investigate the timing and neural underpinnings of interactions between accent and linguistic predictive processes.

Profile 2 - The successful candidate will perform research aiming to explore how foreign-accented speech impacts performance in tasks involving thinking, judgment, and decision-making, compared to native-accented speech. Research methods will include behavioral measures of cognitive biases and decision-making frameworks.

The Doctoral Candidate (DC) will be part of an international network of 13 research labs located throughout Europe who work on the EU funded HUM.AIN-ACCENT project. The full consortium count with a total of 24 academic and non-academic partners in Europe, Canada and the USA. As part of the training, the DC will attend regular events across Europe and will realise short stays (secondments) to at least two Beneficiary/Partner Organizations.

HUM.AIN-ACCENT is an interdisciplinary research project that explores the neurocognitive and social impacts of foreign-accented speech in human-human and human-AI interactions. With millions of new arrivals to the European Union each year, there is an urgent need to understand how foreign accents influence communication, decision-making, and social dynamics. Research has shown that foreign-accented speech can generate biases and increase cognitive load, yet the origins and consequences of these effects are still poorly understood. The HUM.AIN-ACCENT project aims to fill this gap by combining insights from cognitive psychology, neuroscience, AI engineering, human-computer interaction, and social science, with lifespan perspectives. Using advanced methodologies like neuroimaging, eye-tracking, virtual reality, and neural tracking, the project will investigate how foreign-accented speech affects neural responses, attention allocation, and social judgments. By studying both human-human and human-AI interactions, the project will provide critical insights into how accents shape communication and behaviour in diverse contexts.

Job description:

Profile 1 - The successful candidate will receive interdisciplinary training in theories and methods for the study of cognitive neuroscience. This includes many network-wide events and other (international) training opportunities.

Profile 2 - The successful candidate will receive interdisciplinary training in theories and methods for the study of cognitive psychology. This includes many network-wide events and other (international) training opportunities.

The University of Padova provides a rich research environment with access to laboratory rooms, computers and software programs, as well as office spaces with high-speed Internet connection, a University Library System with access to more than two million documents, about 372 online databases and over 78.000 scientific e-journals widely meeting the specific study and research needs of the various scientific areas, a University Language Center which organizes Italian Language courses for foreign students enrolled at the University of Padua and for students and researchers coming at the University within a mobility programme, a Multimedia & Digital learning Office providing technological support for training and research activities.

DPSS hosts several laboratories for chronometric and behaviour measures recording, as well an EEG laboratory with two recording rooms, equipped with two Brain Products© recording systems with active electrodes, with 32- and 64-sensor montages. DPSS also provides all necessary lab-software and licenses for conducting experimental research both in the laboratory and online.

More information about the facilities and laboratories can be found at:

<https://www.dpss.unipd.it/en/research>

Profile 1 Supervisor: Francesca Peressotti is a Full Professor at the University of Padova. Since the beginning of her career, her research has focused on language processing, with studies in areas such as reading and word recognition processes, first and second language production and comprehension, as well as sign languages. Recently, she has expanded her research to include minority languages, such as dialects.

Profile 2 Supervisor: Eduardo Navarrete is an Associate Professor at the University of Padova. His research has focused on language production across languages of different modalities, such as oral and sign languages, and with both monolingual and bilingual individuals. He also investigates the influence of language on other cognitive abilities, such as decision making, judgment, and perception.

1. CANDIDATES' PROFILE AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Required skills:

Candidates must hold a Master's degree (or equivalent) in Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Neuroscience, or Linguistics. Experience with experimental research in cognitive , and/or experimental psychology, and/or psycholinguistics. Knowledge of experimental research methodology and at least basic statistical analysis is expected. Advanced proficiency in commonly used software for text processing (e.g., Microsoft Word) and data management (e.g., Microsoft Excel) is required. A high level of proficiency in spoken and written English is mandatory.

DCs must comply with the Marie Curie Actions mobility rule:

- the researcher must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the beneficiary (in this case, Italy) for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately before their appointment.
- The researcher cannot already be in possession of a doctoral degree.

Desirable skills:

- Domain-specific knowledge: Background in psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, or related fields. Understanding of experimental design and behavioral research methods.
- Technical skills: Experience in experimental data collection. Familiarity with programming languages (e.g., Python, MATLAB). Experience with EEG recording and analysis (other neuroimaging techniques are a plus). Knowledge of statistical modelling and data analysis methods.
- Research and academic skills: Experience in academic writing (e.g., publications, theses, or reports). Ability to critically evaluate scientific literature. Attention to detail and good organizational skills.
- General competencies: Strong communication and interpersonal skills. Ability to work independently as well as in a collaborative, interdisciplinary team. Proficiency in English (language certificates will be taken into consideration).
- Additional assets (not required but advantageous): Experience with preregistration and open science practices. Familiarity with corpus analysis or computational linguistics. Skills in presenting research to academic and non-academic audience.

2. WORKING CONDITIONS

- Gross salary: 3821,53€ gross entity
- Mobility allowance: 710 €
- Family allowance (if applicable): 495€

The gross recipient amount of the doctoral scholarship will be approximately €3,000 per month for single individuals with no dependents. This amount will increase of approximately 300€ gross percipient per month if you have a registered partner and/or dependent children.

Training opportunities and Career development plan:

Researchers at any stage of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, are given an opportunity for professional development and for improving their employability through access to a Personal Career Development Plan which includes

1. Training through individually personalized research projects under senior supervision
2. Exchanging knowledge with the scientific community and the general public
3. Network-wide training in theory and methods
4. Complementary training courses
5. Involvement in proposal writing, task coordination
6. Development of skills for the organization of training and scientific events

DPSS seeks to foster an environment where all talents can flourish, regardless of gender, age, cultural background, nationality or impairments. If you have any questions relating to accessibility or support contact us.

3. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

Language policy

- The national language, Italian, will be an asset for this particular position

4. APPLICATION PROCESS:

Submission of the application and documentation:

To submit your application, please fill in the form at this link <https://forms.gle/UwflYA3UNKo4YvNb8>, choosing the Profile you are applying for.

The form will ask you to upload specific documents:

- A curriculum vitae clearly indicating the initial and final dates of each employment / training/ study activity
- A statement outlining research interests and motivation to apply for the position (1 page maximum)
- Two letters of recommendation
- Transcript of records for the master's and bachelor's degrees, a summary of previous work

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to at least one online interview.

Application process timetable:

- 1) Deadline for application: 20/10/2025

2) Evaluation by committee: 22/10/2025 – 14/11/2025

3) Interviews: 17/11/2025 – 03/12/2025

4) Final decision: 10/12/2025

5) Feedback to all applicants: 20/12/2025

Contact details for enquiries:

Profile 1 - Professor Francesca Peressotti (francesca.peressotti@unipd.it)

Profile 2 - Professor Eduardo Navarrete (eduardo.navarrete@unipd.it)

Privacy Notice:

Please be informed that we will process personal data such as your name, photo, address, email address, or personal data contained in your curriculum vitae, recommendation letter or other documents submitted by you in response to this vacancy for recruitment and selection and audit purposes.

All data will be processed in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679).

Data will be shared with the Project Consortium Partner, which must process personal data under the Agreement in compliance with the applicable EU, international and national law on data protection (in particular, Regulation 2016/679) for the candidate selection.

In case you object to the processing of your data, please consider that we will not be able to consider your application.

A complete version of the University's data-processing information guide is available at <https://www.unipd.it/en/privacy>, selecting the "Recruitment" menu.