

## **Annotating dialogue and argumentation with specialized tools: the OVA web interface and its potential for argumentative analysis, powered by Inference Anchoring Theory**

**In the context of LAND: Doctoral Programme in Applied Linguistics: Managing Languages, Arguments and Narratives in the Datafied Society (LAND)**

### **Details**

- Dates: 6-7 February 2025
- Place: USI Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Room TBA
- Course instructors: Giulia D'Agostino, Andrea Rocci
- 1,5 ECTS
- **Deadline for enrolment: 27 January 2025**

### **Provisional schedule**

Day 1 (February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025), 9am-4pm (incl. breaks)

#### **MORNING**

- *Rocci*: General introduction to argumentation and dialogue theory
- *D'Agostino*: Introduction to the use of the OVA platform

#### **AFTERNOON**

- *D'Agostino*: Inference Anchoring Theory (IAT): inferential, dialogical and illocutionary structures
- *D'Agostino and Rocci*: Inferential *loci* in the annotation of arguments

Day 2 (February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025), 9am-4pm (incl. breaks)

#### **MORNING**

- *Rocci*: Presentation of the activity types under analysis and their distinctive characteristics
- *D'Agostino*: Peculiar and/or tricky cases of annotation
- *D'Agostino*: Full in-class annotation with correction in pairs

#### **AFTERNOON**

- *D'Agostino*: Additional modules to basic IAT annotation: prefaces to questions, closed-list questions, response types
- *D'Agostino*: Instructions on the final test

### **Description**

The course aims at giving an overview of the OVA annotation platform and the theoretical underpinnings of the Inference Anchoring Theory that was developed to naturally capture in OVA the dialogical characteristics of an (argumentative) interaction.

Following a brief theoretical introduction to the general theme of argumentation and its logical and linguistic components, the course will be predominantly empirical: practical examples and real-time annotation exercises will allow for the inductive emergence of the theoretical counterpart on the various topics introduced.

Examples and annotation will be based upon a variety of genres and communicative events, demonstrating the versatility of the toolkit provided for a variety of applications.

Requirements for the awarding of 1.5 ECTS:

- Preparatory readings
- Presence (no less than 80%)
- Active participation throughout the course

- Final test, consisting in the individual annotation of a short text provided after the conclusion of the course; submission by Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February, to be granted the pass/fail evaluation.

More detailed information (e.g. preparatory materials) will be provided at a later time.

The course is primarily targeted at PhD students but is also open to Master's students attendance, as it provides theoretical and methodological insights for both novice and advanced participants dealing with dialogical exchanges in the various contexts.

The main course instructor is *Giulia D'Agostino*, PhD candidate at the Institute of Argumentation, Linguistics and Semiotics of Università della Svizzera italiana. Her expertise ranges from linguistic theory to informal argumentation to argument mining, as well as linguistic annotation and annotators training. She currently works on a SNSF funded project on argumentative patterns retrieval in earnings conference calls. She is also associate member of the Centre for Argument Technology of the University of Dundee (Scotland), which is where OVA and IAT were originally developed; she is a member of the centre's working group on the specification and update of IAT principles. More information about her publications, attendance to conferences, courses taught, and more can be found on her personal webpage: <https://usi.to/bbds>. Throughout the course, she will be supported by the expertise and experience of Prof. *Andrea Rocci*, full Professor of Language Sciences at Università della Svizzera italiana and Director of the Master programme in European Studies in Investor Relations and Financial Communication (ESIR) offered jointly with Università Cattolica (Milan). He has published extensively in the fields of argumentation, pragmatics, semantics and discourse analysis. He has directed / is directing several projects on argumentation in the contexts of journalism, corporate communication and financial communication funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). More information on his personal webpage: <http://usi.to/e3y>

## Enrolment

The deadline for enrolment is 27 January 2025. PhD students from USI can enroll via the dedicated platform. PhD students from other institutions can enroll by sending an e-mail to: [narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch](mailto:narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch). For any questions please send an e-mail to [claudia.coppola@usi.ch](mailto:claudia.coppola@usi.ch) or to [narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch](mailto:narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch).

Participation in the course is free and open to all people interested. The LAND Doctoral Programme provides financial support to PhD students participating in the Programme and to other PhD students based in Switzerland.

**Note:** The course is part of an initiative within the doctoral program Managing Languages, Arguments and Narratives in the Datafied Society aimed at fostering the fast transfer of specific methodological skills acquired by early career researchers (including advanced PhD students) within their research projects to other PhD students and advanced master students starting their research journey.