

Preserving the past, shaping the future: the sixth international workshop on the history of speech communication research (HSCR 2024)

The Sixth International Workshop on the History of Speech Communication Research (HSCR 2024) was held on September 20–21, 2024, at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest, Hungary. This international workshop focused on advancing speech communication research and provided a unique forum for researchers to integrate past research into future studies.

Jürgen Trouvain, the keynote speaker on the first day, focused on the diversity within phonetic sciences from 1920 to 2020, highlighting the contributions of three influential scholars: Louise Kaiser, Ilse Lehiste, and Anne Cutler. Additionally, he pointed out a gradual increase in female scholars' participation over time.

Michael Ashby discussed the career of Denes (1920-1996), a Hungarian-born engineer who made significant contributions to speech research. Denes' life and work reflect many key developments in speech analysis throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Moving away from analog systems has become standard practice in the field due to his contributions.

Angelika Braun explored the evolution of phonetic research methods and tools in Germany, with a particular focus on the period before World War II. Furthermore, she discussed the contributions of German laboratories to experimental phonetics, highlighting their role in organizing early phonetics conferences and contributing to key journals, such as *VOX* and *Phonetica*.

Annie Rialland explored the early development of experimental phonetics in France, highlighting Pierre-Jean Rousselot's contributions and his collaborations with Adrien Millet and Hubert Pernot, who helped sustain his legacy after he died in 1924. She also explored the historical correspondence between Pernot, Millet, and Josef Chlumský, revealing their efforts to preserve Rousselot's legacy.

Pavel Šturm examined the development of experimental phonetics journals in Europe during the interwar period, relying on the archival correspondence and differing visions of key figures: Hubert Pernot, Edward Wheeler Scripture, Adrien Millet, and Josef Chlumský.

Rüdiger Hoffmann explored the application of photography and cinematography at the Hamburg Phonetics Laboratory, established in 1910. The laboratory has been known for its innovative use of visual media to study speech production. Hoffmann mentioned the photographic archive from the laboratory, now preserved at TU Dresden, which includes over 2,000 digitized images documenting early phonetic experiments, devices, and anatomical studies.

Attila Starčević presented phonetic observations made by György Komáromi Csipkés, a Hungarian theologian, in his 1664 grammar titled *Anglicvm Spicilegium*, which was intended for Hungarian students to learn English and read English texts. Starčević emphasized that although Komáromi was not a linguist, he drew comparisons between English and Hungarian sounds, contributing to our current understanding of some debated issues, particularly regarding the pronunciation of Middle English vowels and consonants.

Quintino Lopes presented the PHONLAB project, which aims to preserve the history of the Experimental Phonetics Laboratory at the University of Coimbra. The project seeks to recover this heritage through the curation of historical instruments, digitization of recordings, and cataloging of documents. Lopes stated that one of the project's goals is to establish a permanent exhibition dedicated to Armando de Lacerda and his work at the University of Coimbra.

Mária Gósy presented the origins, history, and use of the Hungarian word *izé*, as well as its shifting connotations from neutral to vulgar over time, drawing on historical sources, dictionaries, and recordings from the Hegedűs Archive.

András Cser shared his insights into how vowel length was documented and interpreted in Hungarian, particularly from the 16th to 18th centuries, as well as the challenges of accurately representing vowel length in writing, technical constraints, and printing limitations.

On the second day of the workshop, speakers discussed the progression of speech research methods and how these innovations shaped the field. During the first presentation of the day, Ákos Gocsál analyzed the phonetic and linguistic characteristics of early Hungarian broadcast speech. Furthermore, Gocsál argued that creating a database for old newsreels would significantly contribute to a better understanding of historical language use, making them a valuable resource for studying authentic language use that can address specific research questions.

Angélique Amelot presented the process of restoring instruments used in experimental phonetics at the Institute of Phonetics in Paris during the early 20th century. She described the efforts to clean, restore, and identify the instruments and the use of modern techniques, such as 3D printing, to replace missing parts, as well as cataloging and digitally archiving the instruments, making them accessible for the future. Amelot introduced a table game called “Phonetic Pursuit,” a game that displays instruments interactively, allowing participants to engage with the devices and understand their historical use.

Harald Höge presented the SPICOS project, which was the first continuous speech-driven dialogue system developed between 1984 and 1990 by Siemens, Philips, and the IPO Institute of the Technical University of Eindhoven. The SPICOS project laid the foundation for modern AI systems based on data-driven learning and

large amounts of speech resources. Höge also mentioned that the project further influenced commercial applications such as automatic speech recognition systems for mobile phones and medical dictation.

Didier Demolin focused on Pierre-Jean Rousselot's contributions to the evolution of speech sounds and experimental methods in phonetics. Rousselot theorized that phonetic evolution is gradual and that variations in articulation are passed down and modified over generations. Demolin argued that although this theory was not widely accepted during his time, particularly among structuralists, his contributions laid the foundation for the study of sound change and variation, making him a central figure in the development of modern phonetics.

Alexandra Markó provided an overview of the development of articulatory phonetics research in Hungary from the late 19th century to the present. Furthermore, Markó highlighted the most recent phase, beginning in 2016, with the establishment of the MTA–ELTE Lingual Articulation Research Group, which propelled current research using modern tools and methods.

Jingyi Sun presented the academic contributions of Chinese scholars who pursued advanced degrees in phonetics at the University of Paris between the 1920s and the 1940s, as well as the work of these scholars. She further expressed that the work of these scholars continues to inform contemporary research on Chinese tones and that his methodological advancements and empirical findings have had a lasting impact on the field.

Judit Bóna provided a historical overview of child language research presented at the International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS) from 1932 to 2023. The analysis shows a steady growth in child language research at the ICPhS, peaking in 2023, although the overall percentage remains low. Bóna emphasized the need for further expansion of child-language research at the ICPhS, and more attention should be given to lesser-studied languages and non-Indo-European linguistic families, as well as to various age groups, particularly infants and adolescents, which are still underrepresented.

Gábor Olaszy presented the development and history of the GOH hearing screening method, which is a tool used to assess hearing in children through the application of low-redundancy synthesized words. Olaszy emphasized that the GOH method is a valuable tool for screening children's hearing, facilitating the early detection of hearing impairments. Its practical use over the past 40 years has helped many children to receive timely treatment. Furthermore, it is an accessible tool that various professionals, such as teachers and speech therapists, can administer. Olaszy also demonstrated the devices to the audience, allowing them to try them out and provide further explanations.

Jacek Kudera presented early studies of South Slavic accentuation, focusing on historical methods of annotating stress through the use of musical notation. He shared his insights into the work of 19th-century linguists and musicologists who attempted to describe the complex tonal features of South-West Slavic languages using musical symbols. Kudera shared his research on how these methods were tested in an experiment involving contemporary native speakers from different dialects (Kajkavian, Čakavian, and Štokavian).

Boróka Balázs presented Gabriella Viktor's pioneering contributions to early Hungarian child language research. Published in 1917, her work *The Language of the Child* is among the earliest scientific explorations of child language in Hungary and is noteworthy for its primarily linguistic focus, diverging from the more common pedagogical and psychological approaches of the time. Balázs concluded her presentation by mentioning that Viktor's work reflected contemporary theories, but also introduced novel ideas, such as the influence of child language on adult speech, a perspective that was later contested.

The Sixth International Workshop on the History of Speech Communication Research (HSCR 2024) brought together researchers from different disciplines to reflect on the evolution of speech communication research. The workshop emphasized the contributions of early pioneers, advancements in methods, and the role of historical preservation. The workshop emphasized the importance of diversity and interdisciplinary collaboration in phonetic sciences, highlighting the need for a broader understanding of time, culture, and methodologies.

NILAY NUR TAŞDEMİR
ELTE BTK Doctoral School of Linguistics
nilaynur@student.elte.hu
<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8822-1217>