

**ICAME Workshop: Speech Acts in Formal and Informal Interactions in English:
Mapping the Past, Exploring the Future
Vilnius, June 17, 2025**

Convenors:

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In recent decades, speech act use in English has received considerable attention, producing a substantial body of research drawing on both historical and present-day data. Studies have covered a range of speech acts, including, among others, apologies, compliments, requests and thanking. These have been explored across different types of interactions and communicative settings, such as authentic and fictional conversations (e.g., Schauer and Adolphs 2006, Culpeper and Archer 2008, Jucker and Taavitsainen 2008, Jucker et al. 2008, Jautz 2013, Jucker 2017, Haselow 2024), letter-writing, email correspondence and other types of computer-mediated communication (e.g., Lutzky and Kehoe 2017, Murphy and De Felice 2018, De Felice and Moreton 2019, Elswailer 2024), courtroom discourse (Archer 2005, Kryk-Kastovsky 2009, Chaemsaithong 2018) as well as service encounters and other workplace interactions (e.g., Bös 2007, Vine 2009, Fox and Heinemann 2021, Barron 2022), to name but a select few.

This body of work, drawing on spoken and written as well as naturally occurring and elicited data, has enabled us to develop an empirically-grounded understanding of speech act use across various forms of interaction, moving beyond their initial descriptions founded on individual intuitions. At the same time, the fact that this work is based on a wide range of sources and often (understandably) reflects specific research interests of individual scholars limits the comparability of findings for particular speech acts. This is the result of a number of factors, including – but not limited to – the use of different categorisation approaches to speech acts, form-first vs. function-first searches, availability of speaker metadata, and types of texts included in the corpora.

In this workshop, we therefore aim to tackle the issue of comparability of corpus-based speech act research. Our discussions will be informed by three key research questions:

1. How can we make different datasets comparable?
2. How can we draw overarching conclusions from individual studies?
3. Is it possible to draw diachronic comparisons if our knowledge about communicative settings is limited?

We invite contributions on speech act use in either formal or informal interactions drawing on historical or present-day English corpus data, or both, that address the issue of comparability by focusing on methodological aspects relating to

- which data are used
- the size of datasets
- how and whether datasets are prepared or annotated
- which metadata are available
- how conventional and non-conventional speech acts are retrieved in non-annotated data.

We are additionally interested in contributions which explicitly compare corpus-based speech act research to insights from other methodological approaches such as experimental studies, elicitation studies, etc.

Abstracts should be between 400 and 500 words (excluding references) and should clearly state research question(s), approach, data, method, and (expected) results.

Please send your abstract to Christine.Elsweiler@uibk.ac.at by 24 January 2025

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