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# Designing a cluster of courses based on a research project

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# Hyperspacing the verb

- **Bilateral research project** between Austria and Slovenia funded by the Austrian National Science Agency (FWF).
- **Topic:** Lexical level properties of Slovenian and Bosnian / Croatian / Montenegrin / Serbian (BCMS) verbs.
- **Domains:** Empirical and theoretical semantics, syntax, morphology and phonology.
- **Researchers:** Boban Arsenijević, Marko Simonović, Stefan Milosavljević (University of Graz) and Lanko Marušič, Rok Žaucer and Petra Mišmaš (University of Nova Gorica).

# WeSoSlav

- One of the central deliverables of the project.
- A database of
  - 8300 verbs from the two languages
  - annotated for a range of lexical level properties –
    - semantic (e.g. aspect),
    - syntactic (e.g. case assigned to arguments),
    - morphological (e.g. suffixes) and
    - phonological (e.g. prosodic shape).
- Basis for a broad range of different research questions, matching a variety of datasets and tasks of different levels and granularities.
- Saves time for the preparation of datasets, gives structure and sets a frame.

# Students

- Slavic studies.
- Bachelor, but also Master level.
- 3 levels of proficiency:
  - learners,
  - monolingual speakers,
  - heritage speakers.
- Very little to no background in scientific / linguistic methodology, or in technical competences (even for the basic software or corpus searches).
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# Models of usage

- Database development and annotation:
  - students pursue the entire procedure of annotation of new properties on parts of the database
  - Example: thematic roles.
- Data analysis:
  - students formulate and statistically test hypotheses about the interactions of the annotated properties
  - Example: correlations between perfectivity and assignment of accusative.
- Corpus research based on the database:
  - students search corpora and gather data for classes of verbs defined by an annotated property
  - Example: nominalizations derived from verbs with prosodic prominence on the inflection, on the theme vowel, on the root or on the prefix.

# Teaching method

1. Introduce the theoretical background in parallel with the methodological basics, and then in several steps identify problems and let the students cope with them with as little intervention as manageable:
2. Formulate a research question,  
2a. leading to the first problem: **how can we best use WeSoSlav to address it?**
3. Define a set of tasks to accomplish 2a,  
3a. leading to a set of methodological and technical problems (emerging on the way): **how to successfully accomplish them?**
4. Discuss the outcome and draw theoretical conclusions;  
4a. the outcomes are rarely fully congruent, unambiguous and decisive, leading to the final set of problems: **how to interpret the results?**
- 5.

# Aims

- Get a real experience of pursuing research in the field of study.
- Acquire in a heuristic way methodological skills and competences necessary for linguistic research.
- Acquire technical skills and competences necessary for linguistic research.
- Gain descriptive and theoretical knowledge in the language of study.
- Advance problem-solving capacities.
- Advance interpretive and logical skills.
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**THANKS!**