

Word-Formation in Non-Standard Languages

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By the term non-standard languages we mean linguistic varieties defying a proper standard because they serve as minority language within a state or region, and/or they are used as alternative expressive means forming part of the repertoire of the community in which a standard language is spoken, and/or finally they deviate from the standard insofar as they function as regiolects, slang, or informal sociolects (Nic Craith 2006, Hogan-Brun & O'Rourke 2019). While often stigmatized or deemed “informal”, “oral”, “volatile” or “unstable”, they are linguistically valid, expressive, and essential for cultural identity. Due to their negative sociolinguistic status, information about word formation is often scarce, also due to the limited availability of resources, and not least due to processes of language decay.

In this respect, these linguistic varieties are often labeled as low-density languages because of the scarce amount of digital resources compared to high-density languages, generally including standard varieties (Maxwell & Hughes 2006, Gaeta *et al.* 2022). While digital resources have impressively improved the methods and the knowledge of standard varieties, one wonders whether the same methods and knowledge can also be acquired for non-standard languages. This is particularly difficult in some specific areas of word-formation, such as for example the investigation of productivity and generally of the quantitative aspects of word-formation patterns (Baayen 2009, Fernández-Domínguez 2013, Berg 2020), or of the competition of multiple word-formation patterns in the same domain (Huyghe & Varvara 2023, Radimský *et al.* 2026), because the amount of data available for non-standard languages is surely incomparable to what has been collected in the recent decades for standard languages.

The aim of this conference is to bring together scholars working on word-formation and interested into expanding their expertise on non-standard languages, with particular but not exclusive reference to the following research topics:

- documenting word-formation in non-standard languages
- elaborating linguistic resources for studying word-formation in non-standard languages
- contrasting word-formation in standard and non-standard languages
- the role of the standard for the development of word-formation in non-standard languages
- loan and native word-formation in non-standard languages

- the role of language planning for the word-formation of non-standard languages
- the contribution of non-standard languages to the elaboration of theoretical models of word-formation
- diamesic differences of word-formation between standard and non-standard languages
- productivity of word-formation in non-standard languages
- pattern competition in the word-formation of non-standard languages
- word-formation and language decay
- word-formation and language acquisition in non-standard languages

Plenary speakers

- Angela Ralli (University of Patras)
- Franz Rainer (University of Business and Economics Vienna)
- Francesco Gardani (University of Zurich)
- Susanne Michaelis (University of Leipzig)
- Mauro Tosco (University of Turin)
- Guido Canepa (University of Turin)
- Raffaello Bezzina (University of Malta)

Scientific Committee

- Raffaello Bezzina
- Guida Canepa
- Livio Gaeta
- Francesco Gardani
- Guglielmo Inglese
- Susanne Michaelis
- Angela Ralli
- Franz Rainer
- Gianmario Raimondi
- Matteo Rivoira
- Mauro Tosco

Organizers

- Livio Gaeta (livio.gaeta@unito.it)

- Guglielmo Inglese (guglielmo.inglese@unito.it)

Abstract submission

Abstracts focusing on, but not limited to, the above-mentioned topics may be submitted to livio.gaeta@unito.it by November 30, 2026, specifying in the object “Word-Formation in Non-Standard Languages”. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words (excluding references) and must be written in English. Communications of acceptance will be given before December 31, 2026.

A selection of the papers presented at the conference will be published in a peer-reviewed volume.

References

- Gaeta, L., M. Angster, R. Cioffi & M. Bellante (2022), Corpus linguistics for low-density varieties. Minority languages and corpus-based investigations. In M. Grossmann et al. (eds.), *Corpus et données en morphologie*. Special Issue of *Corpus* 23 <https://doi.org/10.4000/corpus.7345>.
- Hogan-Brun, G. & B. O’Rourke (eds.) (2019), *The Palgrave Handbook of Minority Languages and Communities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Huyghe, R. & R. Varvara (2023), Affix rivalry: Theoretical and methodological challenges. *Word Structure* 16.1: 1–23.
- Maxwell, M. & B. Hughes (2006), Frontiers in Linguistic Annotation for Lower-Density Languages. In Proceedings of the Workshop on Frontiers in Linguistically Annotated Corpora 2006. Association for Computational Linguistics: 29-37.
- Nic Craith, M. (2006), *Europe and the Politics of Language Citizens, Migrants and Outsiders*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Radimský, J., M. S. Micheli, T. Mrkvička, P. Štichauer (2026) Competing constructions in Italian: a diachronic study of NN compounds and their NPN counterparts. *Morphology* 36, 7 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11525-026-09455-8>.