

# Michael Becker

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Department of Linguistics  
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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Phonological determinants in word formation processes
- Computational modeling of lexical and behavioral word formation data
- Documentation and preservation of endangered languages

## EDUCATION

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|-----------|--|
| 2009      | Ph.D. in Linguistics, University of Massachusetts Amherst.               |
| 2002      | M.A. Magna cum laude in linguistics, Tel Aviv University.                |
| 1997—2001 | Interdisciplinary program for outstanding students, Tel Aviv University. |

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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| 2013—present | Assistant professor, Stony Brook University, linguistics department. |
| 2012—2014    | Assistant professor, Indiana University, linguistics department.     |
| 2011—2012    | Visiting assistant professor, UMass Amherst, linguistics department. |
| 2009—2011    | Lecturer, Harvard University, linguistics department.                |
| 2008—2009    | Visiting assistant professor, Reed College, linguistics department.  |

## REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

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|------|---|
| 2018 | <b>Michael Becker</b> , Andrew Nevins, Filomena Sandalo, and Érick Rizzato. The acquisition path of [w]-final plurals in Brazilian Portuguese. <i>Journal of Portuguese Linguistics</i> 17(1),4. DOI: <a href="http://doi.org/10.5334/jpl.189">http://doi.org/10.5334/jpl.189</a> |
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- 2018 Jana Willer Gold, Boban Arsenijević, Mia Batinić, **Michael Becker**, Nermina Čordalija, Marijana Kresić, Nedžad Leko, Franc Lanko Marušič, Tanja Milićev, Nataša Milićević, Ivana Mitić, Anita Peti-Stantić, Branimir Stanković, Tina Šuligoj, Jelena Tušek, and Andrew Nevins. When linearity prevails over hierarchy in syntax. *PNAS* 115:3, pp. 495–500.
- 2017 **Michael Becker**, Lauren Eby Clemens, and Andrew Nevins. Generalization of French and Portuguese Plural Alternations and Initial Syllable Protection. *NLLT* 35:2, pp. 299–345.
- 2016 **Michael Becker** and Maria Gouskova. Source-oriented generalizations as grammar inference in Russian vowel deletion. *Linguistic Inquiry* 47:3, pp. 391–425.
- 2013 Maria Gouskova and **Michael Becker**. Nonce words show that Russian yer alternations are governed by the grammar. *NLLT* 31:3, pp. 735–765.
- 2012 **Michael Becker**, Andrew Nevins, and Jonathan Levine. Asymmetries in generalizing alternations to and from initial syllables. *Language* 88:2, pp. 231–268.
- 2011 **Michael Becker** and Anne-Michelle Tessier. Trajectories of faithfulness in child-specific phonology. *Phonology* 28:2, pp. 163–196.
- 2011 **Michael Becker**, Andrew Nevins, and Nihan Ketrez. The Surfeit of the Stimulus: Analytic biases filter lexical statistics in Turkish laryngeal alternations. *Language* 87:1, pp. 84–125.
- 2011 **Michael Becker** and Kathryn Flack Potts. The Emergence of The Unmarked. In Marc van Oostendorp, Colin J. Ewen, Elizabeth Hume, and Keren Rice (eds.) *The Blackwell Companion to Phonology*, pp. 1363–1379.
- 2010 Christopher Potts, Joe Pater, Karen Jesney, Rajesh Bhatt, and **Michael Becker**. Harmonic Grammar with Linear Programming: From linear systems to linguistic typology. With. *Phonology* 27:1, pp. 77–117.

## SUBMITTED MANUSCRIPTS

- submitted to *Glossa* Honaida Ahyad and **Michael Becker**. Vowel unpredictability in Hijazi Arabic monosyllabic verbs.
- submitted to *Morphology* **Michael Becker** and Michael Dow. Gender without morphological segmentation in French.

under revision for *Phonology* Blake Allen and **Michael Becker**. Learning alternations from surface forms with sublexical phonology. With lingbuzz/002503

## ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS

- 2018 Anne-Michelle Tessier and **Michael Becker**. Vowel but not consonant identity and the very informal English lexicon. In Gillian Gallagher, Maria Gouskova and Sora Yin (eds.), *Supplemental Proceedings of the 2017 Annual Meeting on Phonology*. Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America.
- 2017 **Michael Becker** and Peter Jurgec. Interactions of tone and ATR in Slovenian. In Wolfgang Kehrein, Björn Köhnlein, Paul Boersma & Marc van Oosterdorp (eds.) *Segmental structure and tone*. Tübingen: de Gruyter, pp. 11–25
- 2012 **Michael Becker**. Target selection in Error Selective Learning. *Brill's Annual of Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics* 4, pp. 120–139.
- 2007 **Michael Becker**. Tone licensing and categorical alignment in Serbo-Croatian. In Leah Bateman et al. (eds.) *University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics 32: Papers in Optimality Theory III*. Amherst: GLSA, pp. 1–19.
- 2007 **Michael Becker** and Joe Pater. OT-Help user guide. In Michael Becker (ed.), *University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics 36: Papers in Theoretical and Computational Phonology*. Amherst: GLSA, pp. 1–12.
- 2003 **Michael Becker**. Lexical stratification of Hebrew: The disyllabic maximum. In Yehuda Falk (ed.) *Proceedings of IATL* 19.
- 2003 **Michael Becker**. Hebrew Stress: Can't you hear those trochees? In Elsi Kaiser and Sudha Arunachalam (eds.) *Proceedings of PLC* 26, 9.1: 45–58.

## INVITED TALKS

- 2018 Modeling the Arabic broken plural. Department of Linguistics, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- 2017 The Sublexical Learner. Tutorial given as a part of the Annual Meeting on Phonology, NYU.

- 2017 A produtividade da distribuição vocálica em árabe. Department of Linguistics, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Joint work with Honaida Ahyad (SBU).
- 2016 Segmental effects on stress in Slovenian. Invited keynote speaker at Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics, Cornell University.
- 2015 Acquiring and learning the irregular plural in Brazilian Portuguese. Department of Linguistics, Tel Aviv University. Joint work with Andrew Nevins (UCL) and Filomena Sandalo (UNICAMP).
- 2015 MaxEnt as a baseline theory of grammar. MFM Fringe Meeting, University of Manchester.
- 2015 Learning French plural morphology. Department of Linguistics and Translation at the University of Montreal. Joint work with Blake Allen (UBC), Lauren Clemens (SUNY Albany), Maria Gouskova (NYU) and Andrew Nevins (UCL).
- 2015 Learning grammars, not representations. Department of Linguistics at the University of Maryland. Joint work with Maria Gouskova (NYU) and Blake Allen (UBC).
- 2014 Multiple grammars organize speaker knowledge. SYNC conference, Stony Brook University. Joint work with Maria Gouskova (NYU) and Blake Allen (UBC).
- 2014 Experigen. Tutorial given as a part of Phonology 2014, MIT.
- 2013 A grammatical approach to exceptional Portuguese plurals. Departamento de Linguística, IEL-UNICAMP (State University of São Paulo). Joint work with Lauren Eby Clemens and Andrew Nevins.
- 2013 Computing morphophonology in a constraint-based framework. Linguistics department, Stony Brook University. Joint work with Maria Gouskova and Blake Allen.
- 2012 Universal Grammar protects Initial Syllables. Department of cognitive science, Johns Hopkins University. Joint work with Lauren Eby Clemens, Jon Levine, and Andrew Nevins.
- 2012 La grammaire universelle protège les syllabes initiales. Département de linguistique, Université du Québec à Montréal. Joint work with Lauren Eby Clemens, Jon Levine, and Andrew Nevins.
- 2012 Universal Grammar protects Initial Syllables. Linguistics department, Indiana University. Joint work with Lauren Eby Clemens, Jon Levine, and Andrew Nevins.

- 2011 Universal Grammar protects Initial Syllables. Linguistics department, Harvard University. Joint work with Lauren Eby Clemens, Jon Levine, and Andrew Nevins.
- 2010 Finding Universal Grammar in Initial Syllables. Linguistics department, Stony Brook University.
- 2010 Target selection in Error Selective Learning. At the workshop on computational modelling of sound pattern acquisition. University of Alberta, Edmonton.
- 2009 Learning hidden structure in paradigms. Université Paris 7.
- 2009 Learning hidden structure in paradigms. Linguistics department, UCSC.
- 2009 Surface-based generalizations over lexical exceptions. With Lena Fainleib (Tel Aviv). Linguistics department, UCLA.
- 2008 The role of markedness in generalizing over lexical exceptions. With Lena Fainleib (Tel Aviv). Linguistics department, NYU.
- 2008 Why and how to use Universal Grammar in learning irregular morphology. Linguistics department, Reed College.
- 2008 What do Hebrew speakers know about irregular patterns? The role of Universal Grammar. Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin.
- 2007 The role of statistical generalizations in the grammar. Phonology reading group, University of Tromsø.
- 2007 The role of statistical generalizations in the grammar. Linguistics department colloquium, Ben Gurion University.
- 2006 Computational Optimality Theory with finite candidate sets. MIT Phonology Circle.
- 2006 Computational Optimality Theory with finite candidate sets. Thursday Interdisciplinary Colloquium, Tel Aviv University.

## **REFEREED CONFERENCE PAPERS**

- 2018 Vowel distribution in the Arabic root. 92<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Salt Lake City, Utah. With Honaida Ahyad (Stony Brook).

- 2017 Vowel but not consonant identity and the very informal English lexicon. Annual Meeting on Phonology, NYU. With Anne-Michelle Tessier, Simon Fraser University.
- 2017 Affix-specificity makes stress learnable. 91<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Austin, TX.
- 2016 Inconspicuous unfaithfulness in Slovenian. Annual Meeting on Phonology, USC. With Peter Jurgec, University of Toronto.
- 2016 Sonority restricts laryngealized plosives in Southern Aymara. 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society. With Paola C epeda (SBU).
- 2016 The predictability of vowel alternations in Urban Hijazi Arabic imperfective nonce forms. 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society. With Honaida Ahyad (SBU).
- 2015 The acquisition path of plurals in Brazilian Portuguese. The Romance Turn VII (Venice). With Andrew Nevins (UCL), Filomena Sandalo, and  rick Rizzato (UNICAMP).
- 2015 Fewer grammars, more coverage for the English past tense. 23<sup>rd</sup> Manchester Phonology Meeting. With Blake Allen (UBC).
- 2015 Learning alternations from surface forms with sublexical phonology. 89<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Portland, OR. With Blake Allen (UBC).
- 2014 Learning alternations from surface forms with sublexical phonology. Phonology 2014, MIT. With Blake Allen (UBC).
- 2013 Gender without morphological segmentation in French. Phonology 2013, UMass Amherst. With Michael Dow (Indiana).
- 2013 A quantitative study of the caesura in Baudelaire's and Verlaine's alexandrines. Conference on metrical structure: text-setting and stress, MIT.
- 2013 Grammar inference expresses source-oriented generalizations in Russian yer deletion. 21<sup>st</sup> Manchester Phonology Meeting. With Maria Gouskova (NYU).
- 2013 Wug-testing source-oriented generalizations: grammar inference in yer deletion. 87<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Boston, MA. With Maria Gouskova (NYU).
- 2012 Source-oriented generalizations as grammar inference in yer deletion. 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, CUNY. With Maria Gouskova (NYU).

- 2012 A wug study of the grammar of Russian yers. 86<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Portland, OR. With Maria Gouskova (NYU)
- 2012 Discrete grammar beats phonetics and usage-based predictors in alternations. 86<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Portland, OR. With Lauren Eby Clemens (Harvard) and Andrew Nevins (UCL).
- 2011 Russian yer alternations are governed by the grammar. 42<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, Toronto. With Maria Gouskova (NYU).
- 2011 A richer model is not always more accurate: the case of French and Portuguese plurals. 42<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, Toronto. With Lauren Eby Clemens (Harvard) and Andrew Nevins (UCL).
- 2011 Differential treatment of initial syllables rears its head. 85<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Pittsburgh, PA. With Jonathan Levine (Harvard) and Andrew Nevins (UCL).
- 2010 Differential treatment of initial syllables rears its head. 41<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, UPenn. With Jonathan Levine (Harvard) and Andrew Nevins (UCL).
- 2010 Trajectories of faithfulness in child-specific phonology. 84<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Baltimore, MD. With Anne-Michelle Tessier (Alberta).
- 2010 Initial syllable faithfulness as the best model of word-size effects in alternations. 84<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Baltimore, MD. With Andrew Nevins (Harvard).
- 2009 Initial syllable faithfulness as the best model of word-size effects in alternations. 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, MIT. With Andrew Nevins (Harvard).
- 2009 The role of markedness in generalizing over lexical exceptions. 83<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, San Francisco, CA. With Lena Fainleib (Tel Aviv).
- 2008 The role of markedness constraints in learning lexical trends. 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Chicago, IL.
- 2007 Tone/ATR interactions in Slovenian. 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Formal Description of Slavic Languages (FDSL-7) in Leipzig. With Peter Jurgec (Meertens).

- 2007 From the lexicon to a stochastic grammar. 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, University of Ottawa.
- 2007 From the lexicon to a stochastic grammar. Workshop on Variation, Gradience and Frequency in Phonology, Stanford University.
- 2007 The role of markedness in Hebrew exceptional plurals. Israel Association for Theoretical Linguistics 23, Tel Aviv University.
- 2007 Tone/ATR interactions in Slovenian. Workshop on Segments and Tone, Meertens Institute/Amsterdam University. With Peter Jurgec (Meertens).
- 2007 When and why to ignore lexical patterns in Turkish obstruent alternations. 81<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Anaheim, CA. With Andrew Nevins (Harvard) and Nihan Ketrez (Yale).
- 2006 CCamelOT: An implementation of OT-CC's GEN and EVAL in Perl. 80<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Albuquerque, NM.
- 2003 Lexical stratification of Hebrew: The disyllabic maximum. Israel Association for Theoretical Linguistics 19, Ben Gurion University.
- 2003 Hebrew Stress: Can't you hear those trochees? Penn Linguistics Colloquium 26, University of Pennsylvania.

## **WORKSHOP TALKS**

- 2009 Trajectories of faithfulness in child-specific phonology. Northeast Computational Phonology Circle (NECPhon) III, MIT. With Anne-Michelle Tessier (Alberta).
- 2008 Learning hidden structure in morphological bases. MUMM 2, a UMass-MIT phonology meeting.
- 2007 Prudent error-driven learning in OT-CC. Northeast Computational Phonology Circle (NECPhon), UMass Amherst.
- 2006 When and why to ignore lexical patterns in Turkish obstruent alternations. Yale Turkish Linguistics Workshop. With Andrew Nevins (Harvard) and Nihan Ketrez (Yale).
- 2006 Tone licensing and categorical alignment in Serbo-Croatian. HUMDRUM, Johns Hopkins University.
- 2006 Verum Focus and T-to- $\Sigma$  movement in English. ECO5 syntax workshop, MIT.



- 2004 The interpretation of boundary tones: Turkish and beyond. *Intonation Matters*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- 2004 Lexical exceptions: Putting the grammar to work. *HUMDRUM*, Rutgers University.

## LINGUISTIC SOFTWARE

- 2014 The sublexical morphophonological learner [web application]. With Blake Allen (UBC). Available at [sublexical.phonologist.org](http://sublexical.phonologist.org)
- 2010 Experigen: an online experiment platform. With Jonathan Levine (Harvard). Available at [github.com/tlozoot/experigen](https://github.com/tlozoot/experigen)
- 2007 LexLearn: a learner of irregular phonology using constraint cloning and OT-CC.
- 2007 OT-Help: typology explorer for Optimality Theory and Harmonic Grammar. With Joe Pater and Christopher Potts (UMass). Available at [people.umass.edu/OThelp](http://people.umass.edu/OThelp)
- 2005 CCamelOT: an implementation of OT-CC's GEN and EVAL [web application]. Available at [becker.phonologist.org/CCamelOT](http://becker.phonologist.org/CCamelOT)

## TEACHING

### STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, 2013—PRESENT

Undergraduate phonology (Linguistics 301)  
 Structure of uncommonly taught language (Linguistics 431)  
 Language and Life in Brazil (Linguistics 355)  
 Data Analysis (Linguistics 425)  
 Graduate seminar — phonology (Linguistics 653)  
 Graduate seminar — statistics (Linguistics 650)  
 Graduate phonology I (Linguistics 523)  
 Graduate phonology II (Linguistics 623)  
 Graduate Computational linguistics I

### INDIANA UNIVERSITY, 2012—2013

Undergraduate phonology (Linguistics 307)  
 Undergraduate phonetics (Linguistics 306)  
 Graduate phonology II (Linguistics 642)

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST, 2011–2012**

Undergraduate phonology (Linguistics 402, twice)  
Graduate phonology (Linguistics 603)  
Graduate phonology seminar (co-taught)

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY, 2009–2011**

Phonology I (Linguistics 115a, twice)  
Phonology II (Linguistics 115b, twice)  
Phonology seminar (Linguistics 219r, co-taught)  
Prosody and intonation (Linguistics 152)  
Freshman seminar: “slips of the ear”

**REED COLLEGE, 2008–2009**

Phonology (Linguistics 321)  
Computational phonology (Linguistics 312)  
Prosodic morphology (Linguistics 312)  
Field methods (Linguistics 366, co-taught)  
Morphology (Linguistics 329, co-taught)  
General linguistics (co-taught)

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST, 2005–2008**

Introduction to Linguistic Theory (Linguistics 201, two semesters)  
Modern Hebrew Literature I and II (Hebrew 361 & 362)

**BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY, 2007**

Analysis of Prosodic Phenomena (Linguistics 3024)

**TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY, 2002**

Introduction to Phonological Theory (Linguistics 1022)

**COMPUTATION**

programming	JavaScript, R, Praat, Perl, Python, Java, SQL.
web design	HTML, CSS, JavaScript.
other	ℒ <sub>T</sub> ℒ <sub>X</sub> , *nix.

## **LANGUAGES**

native	Hebrew.
fluent	English, French, Brazilian Portuguese.
extensive	Classical Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, Turkish.
elementary	Other Romance languages (Spanish, Italian), other dialects of Arabic (Palestinian, Lebanese, Moroccan), Russian, Farsi, Aramaic.
fieldwork	Kadiwéu (Guaikurúan), Kuikuro (Cariban).