

MARY BARY

Department of English, Northern Arizona University

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[Google Scholar](#) | [Website](#)

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Education

2023 – Present PhD, Applied Linguistics — Northern Arizona University

Dissertation: Predicting Legal Language Comprehension: A Computational and Linguistic Analysis of Miranda Warning Difficulty

Methods: NLP-driven linguistic feature extraction, corpus analysis, predictive modeling, mixed-methods design

Supervisor: Prof. Scott Jarvis | Committee: Prof. Janet Ainsworth; Prof. Ed Finegan; Dr. Tove Larsson; Dr. Jesse Egbert

2020 – 2023 MA, Linguistics — The University of Utah

Thesis: Elicited imitation as a measure of listening comprehension in the context of forensic linguistics

Supervisor: Prof. Scott Jarvis

2013 – 2016 MA, Teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language — Ferdowsi University

Thesis: The value of song lyrics for teaching and learning English phrasal verbs: A corpus investigation of four music genres

Supervisors: Dr. Hessam Shahriari, Dr. Azar Hosseini Fatemi

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

2026 **Akbary, M.** Sense-Tagging Legal Language: Corpus-Based Disambiguation in Jury Instructions. *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*.

2026 Jarvis, S. & **Akbary, M.** Sentence repetition, paraphrasing, and comprehension: Can you repeat a sentence without understanding it? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190526100269>

2024 Benzaia, L., Jarvis, S., **Akbary, M.** & Park, L. Investigating the relationship between L2 proficiency and Miranda rights comprehension. *International Journal of Speech, Language & the Law*, 31(2), 291–327.

2023 **Akbary, M.**, Benzaia, L., Jarvis, S. & Park, L. Evaluating the utility of elicited imitation as a measure of listening comprehension in the context of forensic linguistics. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, 2(3). Elsevier.

2023 **Akbary, M.** & Jarvis, S. Lexical diversity as a predictor of genre in American TV shows. *Digital Scholarship in Humanities*, 38(3), 921–936. Oxford University Press.

2019 Omidian, T., **Akbary, M.**, & Shahriari, H. Exploring factors contributing to the receptive and productive knowledge of phrasal verbs. *WORD*, 65(1), 1–24.

2016 **Akbary, M.**, Shahriari, H., & Hosseini Fatemi, A. The value of song lyrics for teaching and learning English phrasal verbs. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1–13.

Ongoing Projects

- Kendro, K., Akbary, M., Grixoni, F., Egbert, J., Eggington, B., & Jarvis, S. (under review, Applied Linguistics). Linguistic challenges to comprehending and interpreting jury instructions: Evidence and implications.
- Grixoni, F., Akbary, M., Demir, Y., Egbert, J., Kendro, K., & Jarvis, S. (under review, IJSL). Assessing the Comprehensibility of Jury Instructions: A Multi-Method Linguistic Approach.
- Benzaia, L., Jarvis, S., Christison, M. & Akbary, M. (under review, Int. Journal for Semiotics of Law). A Rights-Based Rubric for Assessing Miranda Comprehension.
- Akbary, M. & Jarvis, S. (in progress). **Predictive Complexity Modeling** of Miranda Warnings: A Large-Scale Statistical Analysis of Legal Comprehensibility. (NLP feature analysis, machine learning, predictive modeling)
- Akbary, M. (in progress). **Mapping Phrasal Verb Distribution in Television Data:** A Statistical Comparison of Genre-Specific Exposure.
- Akbary, M. & Plonsky, L. (in progress). **Automatic Data Extraction in Meta-Analyses** of L2 Research.

Digital Projects & Outreach

2013 – Present **Pinterest (@delamonds)** — 10 million monthly views; 87 million impressions annually. Skills in audience growth, analytics, and communication.

- Built three independent cultural corpora (music lyrics, TV shows, Vogue articles) to track linguistic patterns and analyze audience engagement — applying corpus linguistics and data mining methods to large-scale text data.
- Conducted real-time sentiment analysis using platform engagement metrics (TikTok Live sessions) to identify emerging cultural and linguistic patterns and iterate on content strategy.

Editorial Experience

2023 – Present **Editorial Assistant & Operations Data Analyst** — *Language Learning* (Wiley) [Ranked 2nd globally in Language & Linguistics, Google Scholar Metrics 2025]

- Manage workflows across multiple stakeholders (authors, editors, copyeditors, +35 teams) via OASIS and Wiley systems.
- Prepare annual 30+ page report analyzing journal performance, editorial activity, and processes to guide board decision-making.
- Contribute to annual board meetings, providing analysis to shape the journal's long-term editorial direction.
- Coordinate regular and special issues, balancing tight deadlines with longer-lead editorial projects.
- Report weekly to the editorial board on workflows, performance, and progress toward goals.

Scholarships & Grants

2026 Stoller–Grabe Jarvis (SGJ) Travel Award — NAU, College of Arts and Letters
2026 GSAAL Conference Award — Northern Arizona University
2026 Patricia Mapes Andersen English Scholarship (B) — NAU
2025 Patricia Mapes Andersen English Scholarship (A) — NAU
2025 Graduate Student Government Travel Award — NAU
2024 Stoller–Grabe Jarvis (SGJ) Travel Award — NAU
2024 Law & Corpus Linguistics Conference Travel Grant — Brigham Young University
2024 GSAAL Conference Award — NAU
2023 Graduate Student Travel Assistance — University of Utah
2023 Law & Corpus Linguistics Conference Travel Grant — Brigham Young University
2023 Departmental Conference Grant, AAAL 2023 — University of Utah
2023 University of Utah Graduate Fellowship
2022 Departmental Conference Grant, AAAL 2022 — University of Utah
2022 Robert G. Hunter Graduate Fellowship — University of Utah
2021 Departmental Conference Grant, Corpus Linguistics International Conference — University of Utah
2021 Departmental Conference Grant, IAFL Conference — University of Utah
2020 University of Utah Graduate Fellowship

Certificates

2023 TESOL Certificate
2022 Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion — University of Utah

Other Research Experiences

2024 – Present **Paid Research Assistant, Computational Language Data Analyst** — McKenzie Endowment for Democracy Grant, NAU — Model Utah Jury Instructions (MUJI) Project

PIs: Scott Jarvis, Jesse Egbert

- Conducted large-scale corpus analysis; performed NLP-based linguistic feature extraction and annotation; applied quantitative and mixed-methods approaches to assess legal text comprehensibility.

2025 – 2026 Grading Assistant, ITA 101 & ITA 102: First Year Italian — NAU

2024 – 2025 **Computational Language Data Analyst and Annotator** — LxGrTgr (open-source replication of Biber Tagger), NAU Corpus Club (Volunteer)

- Developed and validated NLP annotation pipelines; contributed to training data preparation and lexico-grammatical tagging for large-scale language modeling.

2024 – 2025 **Automated Literature Screening, FReD** (Replication Database) Project— Contributed to an API-based NLP pipeline project automating the identification of replication studies (Volunteer)

2023 – 2024 **Computational Language Data Analyst** — NAU Corpus Research Lab, Methods Series on Jury Instructions (Volunteer)

2023 – Present Research Assistant — NAU Forensic Linguistics Lab

2024 **Support Role, Expert Testimony** on Language Proficiency — *The State of Washington v. Juan Trejo-Cruz*. Legal Case Collaboration with Prof. Scott Jarvis (Expert Witness for the Defense)

2022 – 2023 Paid Intern (**Paralegal**) — Bonner County Prosecutor's Office, Civil Chief Deputy, Idaho

- Applied corpus linguistics methods to plain language and comprehensibility analysis of institutional guidelines (e.g., ISO standards) for non-specialist audiences.

- Supported compliance auditing by verifying employee practices aligned with official written guidelines in preparation for external review.
- Provided hands-on training in corpus linguistics and statutory interpretation methods to legal staff.
- Performed paralegal duties under the supervision of the Civil Chief Deputy.

2021 – 2023 Research Assistant — University of Utah, '*Conceptual Transfer and Eyewitness Testimony*' | PI: Scott Jarvis

2021 – 2022 Paid Research Assistant — University of Utah, '*Researching Early Childhood Immersion Education and Instructional Practices*' | PIs: MaryAnn Christison & Scott Jarvis

2018 – 2019 Legal Translation — Certified Legal Translation Office, Mashhad

Guest Lectures

Spring 2024 ENG 707 — Seminar on Forensic Linguistics, NAU

Topic: Elicited Imitation Test-Based Model for Predicting Miranda Warning Comprehension

Fall 2022 LING 6150 — Forensic Linguistics, University of Utah (3 sessions)

Topics: Contract Interpretation with Corpus Linguistics | Corpus Linguistics and Plain Meaning | Introduction to Corpus Linguistics

University Teaching Experience

Northern Arizona University

Summer 2025 Program in Intensive English (PIE) — Instructor

Summer 2025 ENG 638-001: Assessment for Second Language Skills — Instructor of Record

Summer 2024 ENG 548: Fundamentals of Second Language Teaching — Instructor

Spring 2024 ENG 707: Seminar on Forensic Linguistics — TA

The University of Utah

Summer 2023 GLOBL 2230-001: Global Citizenship — Instructor

Summer 2023 GLOBL 910-001: English for Academic Purposes 1 — Instructor

Fall 2022 LING 1200-002: Intro to the Study of Language — TA

Spring 2022 LING 3600-001: Cross-Cultural Communication — TA

Fall 2021 LING 3600-001: Cross-Cultural Communication — TA

Summer 2021 LING 3500-090: Intro English Grammar — Instructor

Spring 2021 ENGL 1200-001: Introduction to Study Language — TA

Fall 2020 EAS 1040-002: Grammar & Editing Nouns — Instructor

Summer 2020 LING 3500-090: Intro English Grammar — TA

Conference Presentations

March 2026 **Akbary, M.** & Jarvis, S. *Linguistic Predictors of Listening Comprehension: Modeling Sentence Difficulty in Elicited Imitation and the Miranda Warning*. AAAL 2026, Chicago, IL.

March 2026 Grixoni, F., **Akbary, M.**, Kendro, K., & Egbert, J. Testing the Comprehensibility of Jury Instructions. AAAL 2026, Chicago, IL.

Oct. 2025 Jarvis, S., Egbert, J., **Akbary, M.**, et al. *Testing the Comprehensibility of Jury Instructions through Empirical Linguistic Methods*. 10th Annual Law & Corpus Linguistics Conference, Provo, UT.

Sep. 2025 **Akbary, M.** & Jarvis, S. *Investigating Sentence Difficulty in L2 Elicited Imitation*. SLRF 2025, Flagstaff, AZ.

March 2025 Benzaia, L., Jarvis, S., **Akbary, M.**, & Christison, M. Exploring Broad and Narrow Comprehension of the Miranda Warning. AAAL 2025, Denver, CO.

Oct. 2024 Jarvis, S., Egbert, J., **Akbary, M.**, et al. Improving the Comprehensibility of Jury Instructions. 9th Annual Law & Corpus Linguistics Conference, Provo, UT.

March 2024 **Akbary, M.**, Benzaia, L., & Jarvis, S. Investigating the relationship between L2 proficiency and Miranda rights comprehension. AAAL 2024, Houston, TX.

March 2023 **Akbary, M.**, Benzaia, L., & Jarvis, S. Oral paraphrasing and elicited imitation as tests of listening comprehension in a legal context. AAAL 2023, Portland, OR.

April 2022 **Akbary, M.** & Jarvis, S. Decoding TV genres: A new classification model. UUSCIL 2022, Salt Lake City, UT.

July 2021 **Akbary, M.** & Jarvis, S. Exploring lexical diversity in contemporary American television. Corpus Linguistics 2021, Limerick, Ireland.

March 2016 **Akbary, M.** & Shahriari, H. Phrasal verbs and their role in selecting music for teaching English. LIF 2016, Istanbul, Turkey.

Showcase Participation

March 2025 Jarvis, S., Egbert, J., Kendro, K., **Akbary, M.**, & Grixoni, F. Improving the Comprehensibility of Jury Instructions. CAL-in-ACTION (CIA) Showcase, NAU, Flagstaff, AZ.

Poster Presentations

May 2023 Almas, A., Grunche, I., Kendro, K., **Akbary, M.** & Benzaia, L. *Crosslinguistic influence in event descriptions*. 21st U of Utah Student Conference in Linguistics; 2023 Humanities Research Forum, Salt Lake City, UT.

March 2023 Kendro, K., **Akbary, M.**, Almas, A., & Jarvis, S. *Extralinguistic markers of political affiliation: A corpus analysis of Parler and Twitter*. AAAL 2023, Portland, OR.

Nov. 2022 Kendro, K., **Akbary, M.**, & Jarvis, S. *Internet-influenced shifts in compound word formation and usage frequency*. 15th Biennial High Desert Linguistic Society Conference.

April 2022 Kendro, K., **Akbary, M.**, & Almas, A. *Extralinguistic cues signal group affiliation on social media*. UUSCIL 2022, Salt Lake City, UT.

Professional Service

Reviewing

2025 Reviewer — Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching
2025 Reviewer — Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics
2025 Reviewer — SLRF 2025, NAU
2024 Reviewer — Research Methods in Applied Linguistics
2024 Reviewer — Digital Scholarship in Humanities
2024 Reviewer — AAAL
2024 Reviewer — NAU 16th Annual Undergraduate Symposium
2023 Reviewer — AAAL

Leadership

2024 – 2025 Mentor and Trainer, *Language Learning* Editorial Office (Wiley) — Tutored newly hired editorial assistant; provided ongoing guidance on workflows and best practices.

2022 – 2023 Trained legal professionals in corpus linguistics methods for applied use in high-stakes legal environments (Bonner County Prosecutor's Office, Idaho)

2025 – 2026 Social Coordinator — GSAAL, NAU

2021 – 2022 Vice President — Linguistics Graduate Student Association (LINGSA), University of Utah

Conference Organization

Oct. 2025 Organizing Committee (Finances) — SLRF 2025, NAU
Mar. 2022 Organizing Committee (Abstract Feedback) — UUSCIL 2022, University of Utah
Apr. 2022 Organizing Committee (Organization) — UUSCIL 2022, University of Utah

Other Roles

Sep. 2025 Contributor, *Lancaster-Northern Arizona Corpus of Spoken American English (LANA-CASE)* — Supported completion of a large-scale spoken American English corpus project.

Apr. 2025 Design Committee Member — GSAAL Banquet, NAU

Sep. 2024 Logistics Coordinator, *Language Learning* Editorial Board Meeting, Flagstaff, AZ — Venue, transportation, materials, and scheduling.

May 2023 Volunteer — Humanities Conference 2023, Salt Lake City, UT

Apr. 2022 Session Chair — UUSCIL 2022, Salt Lake City, UT

Apr. 2022 Registration Desk Volunteer — Formal Approaches to South Asian Languages Conference, Salt Lake City, UT

Mar. 2022 Registration Desk Volunteer — 8th International Conference on Immersion and Dual Language Education, Salt Lake City, UT

Professional Memberships

- American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)
- Language Learning Research Club, University of Michigan
- International Association of Forensic Linguists (IAFL)

Community Engagement

2025-2026	GSAAL Fundraising
2024	GSAAL Fundraising for AL/TESL Graduate Students at NAU Commencement
2024	GSAAL Fundraising for AL Graduate Students
2024	Graduate Student Association of Applied Linguistics (GSAAL) Fundraising for AL/TESL Graduate Students at NAU Football Game

Language Skills

Persian; Azeri; English; Türkçe; Arabic; Tajik; Dari; Turkmen

Computer & Programming Skills

Programming	<i>Python, NLP, R</i> (text mining, corpus analysis, feature extraction, predictive modeling)
NLP & Corpus	<i>TreeTagger, WordSmith, AntConc</i>
Statistical	<i>SPSS, JASP, R</i> (regression, classification, predictive modeling, mixed-methods quantitative analysis)
Experiments	<i>Gorilla</i> (reaction-time), <i>Qualtrics, Avicenna</i>
Other	<i>Praat, Westlaw, GARS, Slack</i>
Key NLP Capabilities: Word Sense Tagging & Disambiguation, Semantic Gold-Standard Annotation, LLM Training & Optimization, Automated Genre Classification, Large-Scale Data Mining & Pattern Recognition	