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Sergio Eugenio Zanotto

Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality"
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Research Statement

My research sits between Linguistics, Political Science and Computer Science, investigating political communication with natural language processing (NLP) methods. I am interested in how declining political accountability shapes citizens' trust in contemporary Western societies, drawing on both spoken and written political discourse. Methodologically, I focus on developing and evaluating multilingual speech- and text-based NLP models and benchmarks for tasks such as political promise tracking and fact-checking.

Academic Position

2026 -	**Postdoctoral Researcher**	Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality", University of Konstanz
2021 - 2026	**Doctoral Researcher**	Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality", University of Konstanz

Education

2026	**PhD**	Computational Linguistics	**University of Konstanz**, Germany
2021	**MA**	General Linguistics	**University of Verona**, Italy
2018	**BA**	Languages and Cultures for Publishing	**University of Verona**, Italy

Publications

Peer-reviewed

4. **Sergio E. Zanotto** and Segun Aroyehun. 2025. Linguistic and Embedding-Based Profiling of Texts Generated by Humans and Large Language Models. *Proceedings of the 2025 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing*, 22852–22869.

3. **Sergio E. Zanotto**, Diego Frassinelli and Miriam Butt. 2024. Language Complexity in Populist Rhetoric. *Proceedings of the 4th Workshop on Computational Linguistics for the Political and Social Sciences*, 61–80.

2. **Sergio E. Zanotto**, Qi Yu, Miriam Butt and Diego Frassinelli. 2024. GRIT: A Dataset of Group Reference Recognition in Italian. *Proceedings of LREC-COLING 2024*, 7963–7970.

1. Karen Fort, Laura Alonso Alemany, Luciana Benotti, Julien Bezançon, Claudia Borg, Marthese Borg, Yongjian Chen, Fanny Ducel, Yoann Dupont, Guido Ivetta, Zhijian Li, Margot Mieskes, Marco Naguib, Yuyan Qian, Matteo Radaelli, Wolfgang S. Schmeisser-Nieto, Emma Raimundo Schulz, Thiziri Saci, Sarah Saidi, Javier Torroba Marchante, Shilin Xie, **Sergio E. Zanotto** and Aurélie Névéol. 2024. Your Stereotypical Mileage May Vary: Practical Challenges of Evaluating Biases in Multiple Languages and Cultural Contexts. *Proceedings of LREC-COLING 2024*, 17764–17769.

Book

1. **Sergio E. Zanotto**. 2026. Linguistic Characterization of Populism in U.S. Presidential Campaigns. Doctoral thesis (Dr. phil.), University of Konstanz. *Konstanzer Online-Publikations-System (KOPS)*, forthcoming.

Preprint	1. **Sergio E. Zanotto** and Segun Aroyehun. 2024. Human Variability vs. Machine Consistency: A Linguistic Analysis of Texts Generated by Humans and Large Language Models. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2412.03025*.

Working Papers

5. Talking the talk, but not walking the walk: How autocracies commit to shallow norms in global governance (with Daniëlle Flonk and Maria Debre)

4. From ItalExit to Internationalist: How Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni Transformed Her Online Rhetoric in Tumultuous Times (with Giada Pasquettaz; submitted to *Government and Opposition*)

3. Media Coverage and Party Press Releases in Germany and the UK – Who Follows Whom? (with Alexander Horn; presented at "APSA 2026" and "DVPW Political Economy 2026")

2. Populism Goes Global: The Politics of Performing International Solidarity on Twitter by Populist Leaders (with Giada Pasquettaz, David Garcia and Stephan Lewandowsky; R&R at *Political Communication*)

1. Unveiling Inequality: An Open-ended Survey Approach (with Franco Bastias, Nanna Lauritz Schönhage and Felix Jäger; R&R at *Political Behavior*)

Grants and Fellowships

2025	Transition Fellowship (4-month contract), Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality", University of Konstanz
2024	Doctoral Outgoing Fellowship (3,000 €), Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality", University of Konstanz
2021	Short-Term Researcher Fellowship (4-month contract), Department of Languages and Literatures, University of Verona

Teaching

Corpus Linguistics with Python, MA Speech and Language Processing, Konstanz (2024)
Crowd-Sourced Text Analysis, Komex Methods Excellence Workshops, Konstanz (2022, 2024)

Visiting Positions

2025	Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo	Visiting Researcher
2024	University of Texas at Austin	Visiting Researcher
2023	University of Firenze	Visiting Researcher

Summer Schools

2024	Lisbon Machine Learning School (LxMLS), Lisbon, Portugal
2022	European Summer School in Logic, Language and Information (ESSLLI), Galway, Ireland
2022	Summer School in Annotation, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France

Conferences and Talks

Conferences	Pasquettaz, G., **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2025. Populism Goes Global: The Politics of Performing International Solidarity. *The 2025 IPSA World Congress of Political Science*, Seoul, South Korea. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2025. Divided by Design: Unveiling In-Group and Out-Group Dynamics in US and Italian Political Discourse. *7th Annual COMPTEXT Conference 2025*, University of Vienna, Austria. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2024. GRIT: A Dataset of Group Reference Recognition in Italian. *Joint International Conference on Computational Linguistics, Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC-COLING 2024)*, Turin, Italy. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2024. Types of Inequality: What matters to Whom. *Inequality Conference*, Konstanz, Germany. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2024. Language Complexity in Populist Rhetoric. *Workshop on Computational Linguistics for the Political and Social Sciences*, University of Vienna, Austria.
Talks	**Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2025. Populism Goes Global: International Solidarity on Twitter Around Populist Leaders Across Nations. *Global Governance Research Seminar*, Hitotsubashi Institute for Advanced Studies (HIAS), Hitotsubashi University, Japan. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2025. Analysis of Populist Communication via Computational Models. Lecture in *"Perception of Speaker Characteristics"*, Department of Linguistics, University of Konstanz, Germany. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2024. Statistical Analyses of Populism for Language Complexity. Lecture in *"Comparative Populist Politics"*, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Konstanz, Germany. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2023. What's (the) Right? What's (the) Left? Identities appeals in Italian Political Discourses. University of Roma III, Italy. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2023. Methods on Retrieving Identities appeals in Italian Political Discourses. University of Firenze, Italy. **Zanotto, Sergio E.** 2022. Hedging as a diplomatic tool. University of Verona, Italy.

Skillset

Expert	Python, R, XML, HTML
Proficient	Stata, SQL

Languages

Italian:	Native
English:	C1
Spanish:	B2
German:	A2

Services

Review for	ACL Rolling Review (ARR), Language Resources and Evaluation (Springer), Konstanz Linguistics Conference
Events	Organizer of the Konstanz Linguistics Conference (Konstanz, 2024), Computational Linguistics and Psycholinguistics Reading Group (Konstanz, 2022)
Volunteering	Youth academy coach, Dueville Calcio A.S.D. (Vicenza, 2012-2019), Townhall of Dueville (Vicenza, 2014)

References

Prof. Dr. Miriam Butt
Professor of General and Computational Linguistics
Department of Linguistics, University of Konstanz

Prof. Dr. David I. Beaver
Professor of Linguistics
University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Diego Frassinelli
Center for Information and Language Processing
LMU Munich
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Prof. Dr. David Garcia
Professor of Social and Behavioral Data Science
University of Konstanz

Dr. Alexander Horn
Head of the Emmy Noether Group "Varieties of Egalitarianism",
Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality",
University of Konstanz

Prof. Dr. Valerio Basile
Associate Professor, Computer Science Department
University of Turin
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