

Ethical challenges in applied linguistics research: from grey zone to questionable practices



Workshop

Prof. Dr. Ute Bohnacker
Uppsala University

Chair: Prof. Dr. Anita Thomas, UNIFR

Thursday 23/04/2026, 13:00 – 16:15

Friday 24/04/2026, 9:00 – 13:00

Institut de plurilinguisme

Université de Fribourg

Rue de Morat 24, 1700 Fribourg (Suisse)

☞ Salle K103

There is a broad consensus that researchers should not fabricate data, manipulate results, engage in plagiarism or harm participants. Such research misconduct stands in stark contrast to best practices (ideal research conduct). However, in between these two extremes, there are research practices that might – or might not – be considered questionable. The workshop will address this grey zone, where there is a risk of engaging in questionable research practices in applied linguistics. Thursday afternoon will begin with a lecture by Ute Bohnacker, who will introduce the topic from various angles. The lecture will be followed by exercises on grey-area situations. Friday morning will be mainly devoted to presentations of PhD projects. These presentations should include a section on ethical issues that arise or have arisen in their projects. Time permitting, some additional hands-on grey-area situations will be discussed. The workshop will conclude with a round of reflections.

Biographie

Ute Bohnacker is Professor of Linguistics at Uppsala University. Her research expertise is mainly in first and second language acquisition, child bilingualism, narrative, grammar and discourse, with a special interest in the Germanic languages. She has also

published on family language policy and heritage language transmission (Turkish, Arabic). Over the past ten years, her work has expanded towards language assessment and impaired populations and examines typical and atypical multilingual child language development in a Swedish context. Together with Natalia Gagarina (Leibniz-ZAS Berlin), she has spearheaded the development of the Multilingual Assessment Instrument for Narratives (MAIN).

PhD programme on Multilingualism

The event is part of the doctoral programme Multilingualism: Acquisition, Education, and Society (more information here: <https://institut-plurilinguisme.ch/en/programme-doctoral>)

Workshop Participation

Students and PhD students from Swiss universities are eligible to participate. Travel expenses will be reimbursed under certain conditions.

Contact & Registration

To register, please contact Dr. Marie-Anne Morand (marie-anne.morand@unifr.ch) by **April 12, 2026**. Please indicate whether you would like to present your project.