

CFP: Call for Chapter Proposals for

Xenolinguistics: Toward a Science of Extraterrestrial Language

Would extraterrestrial intelligence have language? If so, what can we say about the nature of such language prior to making contact, or before knowing even whether extraterrestrial intelligence exists? To explore these questions, chapter proposals are invited for an edited book titled *Xenolinguistics: Toward a Science of Extraterrestrial Language*. This book builds upon the forthcoming *Extraterrestrial Intelligence: Cognition and Communication in the Universe* (Oxford University Press, 2018), which is also edited by Douglas Vakoch. **Proposals informed by the philosophy of language or by linguistics are encouraged, as are proposals exploring the distinctive nature of language when compared with nonhuman communication systems.**

Confirmed contributors include:

- “Universal or Terrestrial Grammar?”
Ian Roberts, University of Cambridge, UK
- “Where Does Universal Grammar Fit in the Universe?: Human Cognition and the Strong Minimalist Thesis.”
Jeffrey Punske, Southern Illinois University, USA, and Bridget D. Samuels, University of Southern California, USA
- “Many Ways to Say Things: What the Diversity of Animal Communication on Earth Can Tell Us About the Likely Nature of Alien Language.”
Arik Kershenbaum, University of Cambridge, UK
- “Interspecies Communication: What Decoding Cross-species Communication Signals on Earth Can Tell Us About Deciphering Alien Languages.”
Denise Herzing, Wild Dolphin Project and Florida Atlantic University, USA
- “Why Do We Assume That We Can Decode Alien Languages?”
Con Slobodchikoff, Northern Arizona University, USA
- “Communicative Resources Beyond the Verbal Tier: A View of Xenolinguistics from Multimodal Interactional Linguistics.”
Heike Ortner, University of Innsbruck, Austria
- “Alien Writing Systems.”
Daniel Harbour, Queen Mary University of London, UK

- “Could the Walrus Really Talk with the Carpenter?: Impact of Embodiment on Language Development in Extraterrestrial Intelligence.”
Sheri Wells-Jensen, Bowling Green State University, USA
- “Language Design Features: Violated for Extraterrestrial Intelligence?”
Darcy Sperlich, National Central University, Taiwan
- “How Might Humans Linguistically Adapt to Communication with an ET?”
Laura Welcher, The Long Now Foundation, USA
- “Patterns of Communication of Human Complex Societies as a Blueprint for Alien Communication.”
Anamaria Berea, University of Maryland, USA
- “A Linguistic Perspective on the Drake Equation: Knowns and Unknowns for Human Languages and Extraterrestrial Communication.”
Daniel Ross, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Interested authors should send a 400-word abstract, 200-word biography, and sample of a previously published chapter or article to Douglas Vakoch at dvakoch@meti.org by May 15, 2018. Proposers will be notified about whether their submissions are accepted for the book by May 30, 2018. For accepted proposals, first drafts of full chapters (5,000 words) are due by October 1, 2018, and final versions are due December 1, 2018. Only previously unpublished papers from authors who have already earned a doctorate will be considered. **Chapters should be fully referenced and written in a scholarly style for an audience of linguists, philosophers of language, animal communication researchers, and scientists engaged in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI).**

Given that we have no examples of extraterrestrial intelligence to study, and no empirical proof that such intelligence even exists, there are significant methodological constraints on attempting to anticipate the nature of extraterrestrial language. Chapters that highlight these constraints are especially welcome.

Authors who address possible contact between human and extraterrestrial intelligence should focus on scenarios in which contact is via radio or laser signals transmitted across interstellar space, rather than via face-to-face contact. Proposals that discuss of the possibilities and/or limitations of using natural language to communicate with extraterrestrial intelligence at interstellar distances are welcome.

The editor of *Xenolinguistics: Toward a Science of Extraterrestrial Language*, Douglas Vakoch, is President of METI (Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence), <http://meti.org>. Prior to earning his PhD in psychology (Stony Brook University), he completed his MA in history and philosophy of science (University of Notre

Dame). He has edited fifteen books, including *Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence* (SUNY Press, 2011), *Astrobiology, History, and Society: Life Beyond Earth and the Impact of Discovery* (Springer, 2013), *Archaeology, Anthropology, and Interstellar Communication* (NASA, 2014), *Extraterrestrial Altruism: Evolution and Ethics in the Cosmos* (Springer, 2014), and (with Matthew Dowd) *The Drake Equation: Estimating the Prevalence of Extraterrestrial Life Through the Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).