

ALISON BIGGS

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2018-2019 Georgetown University, Department of Linguistics
Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor in Syntax/Semantics

2015-2018 University of Pennsylvania, Department of Linguistics
Lecturer in Variation

RESEARCH INTERESTS

General

- Theoretical and comparative syntax
- Syntax and its interfaces with morphology, semantics, and lexical meaning
- Morphosyntactic variation/variability and change

Specific

- Verb Phrase morphosyntax and semantics
 - Ditransitives, passives, derived statives, participles, lexical and clausal causation, (in)transitivity, resultative secondary predication, tough-movement, adjunct control
 - Thematic roles
 - The role of the root in argument and event structure syntax and semantics
- Case and differential argument marking
- Mandarin and Sino-Tibetan; the syntax of understudied varieties and languages

EDUCATION

2015 PhD, University of Cambridge
Linguistics
Advisors: Ian Roberts, Theresa Biberauer, Michelle Sheehan

2011 MPhil, University of Cambridge
Linguistics (Distinction)

2010 BA, SOAS, University of London
Modern and Classical Chinese and Linguistics (Hons, First Class)

2007-2008 Beijing Normal University
Study year abroad, Mandarin and Classical Chinese

PUBLICATIONS

Journal articles

- In review Objects in motion verb phrases.
- In review Syntactically determined argument interpretation in transitive motion expressions.
- 2016 Locating variation in the dative alternation. *Linguistic Variation* 16.2: 151-182.

Refereed book chapters and proceedings

- To appear Past/passive participles and locality of attachment. In András Bány, Theresa Biberauer, Jamie Douglas, and Sten Vikner (Eds.), *Clausal Architecture and its Consequences*. Berlin: Language Sciences Press.
- 2018 Locating variation in the dative alternation. In Constantine Lignos, Laurel Mackenzie, and Meredith Tamminga (Eds.), *The locus of linguistic variation*, 1-32. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- 2017 Different paths in Directed Manner of Motion Constructions. In Aaron Kaplan et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL)* 34, 81-88.
- 2017 Variants of Indonesian prepositions as intra-speaker variability at PF. In Amy Goodwyn-Davies and Kajsa Djarv (Eds.), *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics (PWPL)* 23.1, Article 11. With Helen Jeoung.
- 2015 A new Case for A-movement in Northwest British English. In Ulrike Steindl et al. (Eds.) *Proceedings of the West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL)* 32, 218-227.

Volumes (editor)

- 2015 *The Proceedings of the Second Asian and European Linguistic Conference*. Alison Biggs, Man Li, Aiqing Wang, and Cong Zhang (Eds.). Newcastle: Newcastle University.

Dissertations

- 2015 *Dissociating Case from Theta-roles: a comparative investigation*. PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge.
- 2011 *Distinguishing 'root' from 'embedded' in Mandarin Chinese: the empirical evidence and some theoretical consequences*. MPhil dissertation, University of Cambridge.

Manuscripts

- Ms. Building complex eventualities in syntax: the structure the *done* state.
- Ms. The English *get*-passive. With David Embick.

AWARDS

Fellowships and prizes

- 2014-2017 Stipendiary Junior Research Fellowship, Wolfson College, University of Oxford
- 2014 Richard M. Hogg Prize, International Society for the Linguistics of English
- 2013 Premio de Vincenzi Prize at 39 *Incontro di Grammatica Generativa* (IGG 39), best presentation by a student or post-doc; Marica De Vincenzi Onlus Foundation
- 2011 Three year Ph.D fellowship (tuition, stipend, research expenses) European Research Council, via research project *Rethinking Comparative Syntax*
- 2011 Three year Ph.D fellowship (tuition, stipend) (declined), Arts & Humanities Research Council, UK

Grants

- 2015-2017 Oxford University Press John Fell Fund (\$4400). Award 143/063: Documenting variation in spatial markers in the languages of China.
- 2015 Wolfson College Research Fellow Academic Fund (\$650)
- 2014 Conference organization grant, Linguistics Association of Great Britain
- 2012-2014 Conference attendance bursaries, Linguistics Association of Great Britain
- 2012 Three month residency at Queen Mary, University of London, through King's College Cambridge competition.

TALKS

Invited talks and invited workshop participation

- [2018] Building stative complex eventualities in syntax. Yale University Colloquium, November.
- 2018 Variation in *being done*. Princeton University Colloquium, February.
- 2017 Variation in the dative alternation. Paper presented at the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) 92, themed session on Introducing Arguments: Insights from Micro- and Macro-Variation, Austin TX, January.
- 2015 Passive variation in dialects of Northwest British English. University of Pennsylvania Colloquium, September.
- 2015 Features and the typology of radical pro-drop: evidence from Hawai'ian. Null Arguments workshop, University of Cambridge, May.
- 2014 The syntax of space: some problems from Chinese. University of Oxford Linguistics Colloquium talk, November.
- 2014 Passive variation in Northwest British English. International Society for the Linguistics of English (ISLE) 3, University of Zurich, August.

- 2014 A comparative approach to the syntax of Mandarin adpositions. Workshop on Adpositions, Newcastle University, June.
- 2013 Passive variation in Northwest English dialects. English Dialect Syntax Workshop, Darwin College, University of Cambridge, November.

Refereed talks and poster presentations

- [2018] On the syntactic determination of thematic roles: evidence from transitive motion clauses. Talk presented at North East Linguistic Society (NELS) 49, Cornell University, October.
- [2018] On some (event) structural properties of the English *get*-passive. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) 2018, University of Sheffield, September. With David Embick.
- [2018] Thematic roles are determined syntactically in transitive motion expressions. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) 2018, University of Sheffield, September.
- 2018 Objects and unergatives. Talk presented at Unergative Predicates: Architecture and Variation, Bilbao, January.
- 2017 Variation in local syntax across individuals. Poster presented at the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) 91, Austin TX, January. With Meredith Tamminga.
- 2016 Dialectal, individual, and lexical variation in the Done My Homework construction. Talk presented at New Ways of Approaching Variation (NWAV) 45, Simon Fraser University/University of Victoria, November. With Meredith Tamminga.
- 2016 Changing Paths in Directed Manner of Motion Constructions. Poster presented at West Coast Conference in Formal Linguistics (WCCLF) 34, University of Utah, April.
- 2016 On phonologically unrealized prepositions: the syntax and morphology of Indonesian preposition-drop. Poster presented at Penn Linguistics Colloquium (PLC) 40, University of Pennsylvania, March. With Helen Jeoung.
- 2015 Parameters of abstract Case. Poster presented at Generative Syntax in the Twenty-First Century: The Road Ahead, Athens, May.
- 2015 All Case is structural Case? Talk presented at Case and ϕ -features workshop, University of Cambridge, January.
- 2014 Assertion and Speech Acts in embedded clauses: evidence from Mandarin syntax. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) 2014, University of Oxford, September.
- 2014 A new Case for A-Movement in Northwest British English. Talk presented at West Coast Conference in Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 32, University of Southern California, March.
- 2013 Locality in passives: variation in Northwest British English and its consequences. Talk presented at The Manchester Forum in Linguistics (MFiL) 2, University of Manchester, November.

- 2013 The syntax of the speaker in the ‘went and’ construction. Talk presented at the 1st UCL Graduate Conference in Linguistics, UCL, November. (With Anne Beshears)
- 2013 Introduction to Differential Marking. Talk presented at Differential Subject Marking and Ergativity Workshop at Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE) 46, University of Split, September. (With András Bárány and Michelle Sheehan)
- 2013 Microparametric variation in A-movement in Northwest British English. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) 2013, SOAS, August.
- 2013 An abstract Case for A-movement: microvariation in Northwest British dialects. Talk presented at Incontro di Grammatica Generativa (IGG) 39, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, February.
- 2012 Restructuring the *tough* approach to the Mandarin long *bei*-passive. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain (LAGB) 2012, University of Salford, September.
- 2012 Improper approaches to the Mandarin long *bei*-passive. Talk presented at Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE) 45, Stockholm, August.
- 2012 Improper Movement and the long passive in Mandarin. 7th Postgraduate Conference, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, March.
- 2011 The cartography of information structure: the unmarked preposed object in Mandarin and its function in the low periphery. Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain, University of Edinburgh, March.

TEACHING

As Primary Instructor

Georgetown

Spring 2019 Seminar in Syntax & Semantics of Logical Form: Argument Structure (Ling 425)

Spring 2019 Semantics and Pragmatics (Ling 228)

Spring 2019 Grammatical Analysis (Ling 224)

Fall 2018 Research seminar in the syntax-semantics interface: Verb meaning and event structure (Ling 725)

Fall 2018 Graduate Syntax 1 (Ling 425)

Fall 2018 Grammatical Analysis (Ling 224)

University of Pennsylvania

Spring 2018 Argument Structure (Ling406)

Spring 2018 Bilingualism in History (Ling 054)

Fall 2017 Construct a Language (Ling 242)

Fall 2017 Topics in the Syntax-Semantics Interface: Building and interpreting event

structure (Graduate) (Ling 653)

Spring 2017 Topics in the Syntax-Semantics Interface: Causation (Graduate) (Ling 653)

Spring 2017 Construct a Language (Introduction to Typology) (Ling 242)

Fall 2016 Language in Context: East meets West (Ling 056)

Fall 2016 Bilingualism in History (Ling 054)

Spring 2016 Topics in Natural Language Syntax: Variation (Graduate) (Ling 650)

Spring 2016 Patterns in Language (Ling 245)

Fall 2015 Language in China (Ling 145)

Fall 2015 Bilingualism in History (Ling 054)

As TA/Tutor

University of Oxford

2014-2015 Introduction to Linguistics (Paper VIII)

University of Cambridge

2013-2014 Typology (Li17)

2013-2014 Introduction to syntax and semantics (Li2)

2012-2013 Intermediate and advanced syntax (Li9)

Pedagogical training

2013 Teaching students with Asperger's Syndrome, University of Cambridge Professional Development

2012 Undergraduate admissions selection (Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences), University of Cambridge Professional Development

2012 Secondary school teaching and course development, TeachFirst, London

2005 Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Birkbeck, University of London

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2014-2015 University of Oxford, Wolfson College
Junior Research Fellow

2011-2014 University of Cambridge
Rethinking Comparative Syntax (ReCoS) (European Research Council Advanced Grant No. 269752), Principal Investigator: Ian Roberts
Research Assistant

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Editorial board

Journal reviewing

Journal of Linguistics; Language Sciences; Linguistic Analysis; Linguistic Inquiry; Linguistic Variation; Linguistics in the Netherlands

Abstract reviewing

Asian and European Linguistic Conference (AE-Link); Cambridge Comparative Syntax (CamCoS); Diachronic Generative Syntax (DiGS); Linguistic Association of Great Britain (LAGB); Linguistic Society of America (LSA); Penn Linguistics Colloquium (PLC); Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE); West Coast Conference in Formal Linguistics (WCCFL)

Conference and workshop co-organizing

- 2nd Asian and European Linguistic conference, Newcastle University, 5-6 Dec 2014.
- Cambridge Comparative Syntax 3, 8-10 May 2014
- Differential Subject Marking and Ergative Phenomena workshop at the Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea, University of Split, 20-21 Sep 2013.
- Cambridge Comparative Syntax 2, 9-11 May 2013.
- Workshop on Case supporting the Henry Sweet plenary, Linguistics Association of Great Britain, Salford University, 5-8 Sep 2012.
- Cambridge Comparative Syntax 1, 18-19 May 2012.

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

University service

- 2015-2016 Finance Committee, Wolfson College, Oxford
2015-2016 Domestic and Premises Committee, Wolfson College, Oxford
2012-2015 Undergraduate admissions application review, interviews and selection for Linguistics and Linguistics/Modern Languages: Christ's, Fitzwilliam, Homerton, King's, and Robinson Colleges, University of Cambridge
2012 Officer of the graduate student executive committee, King's College, Cambridge

Department service

- 2012-2014 Treasurer, Cambridge University Linguistic Society, University of Cambridge
2013 Co-organizer, Syntax Research Cluster, University of Cambridge

SCIENCE OUTREACH

- 2015 Introduction to Linguistics (one semester course). Oxford Programme for Undergraduate Studies.
2013, 2014 Introduction to Linguistics. Summer school classes. Pembroke-Kings Program, Cambridge.
2012, 2013 *The Building Blocks of Language: LingQUIZtics*. The University of Cambridge

- Festival of Ideas. (With Rethinking Comparative Syntax project members)
- 2013 A Linguistic perspective on language. Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research Public Seminar Series, London, October.
- 2013 Introduction to Linguistics. Summer school classes. Access Cambridge Program, Cambridge, July.
- 2013 The structure of language – graduate study in Linguistics. King’s College Foundation Lunch talk to alumni, University of Cambridge, March.
- 2013 How to acquire a language. King’s College, King’s Lunchtime Seminar Series, University of Cambridge, March.
- 2012-2013 Tutor, secondary school students, various schools for The Brilliant Club, London.

LANGUAGES

Proficient: Mandarin, Classical Chinese, French, German

Research experience: Mandarin; Cantonese, Hawai‘ian; Indonesian; Kurmanji

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Linguistic Society of America

Linguistic Association of Great Britain

The Philological Society