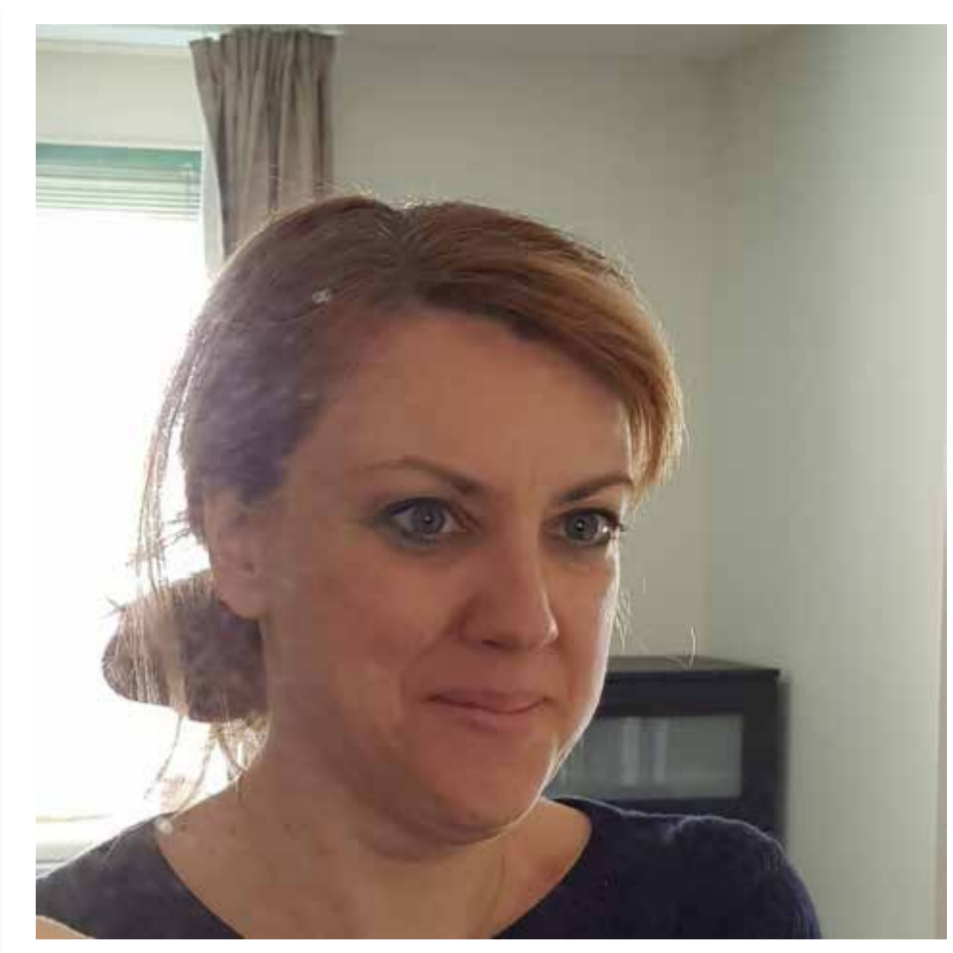


Crossing Phasal Domains: Topic Marking in Romance and Beyond

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Date: 16 March, 2021 (Tuesday)
Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)
***Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM**

Registration Deadline:
12:00nn of 14 March 2021 (Sunday) – Hong Kong Time
The Zoom Meeting details will be provided on 15 March 2021



Prior registration is required

Abstract

Languages have different strategies to mark topics: in many Romance varieties, it is common to find clitic left (or right) dislocation structures, whereby a topic is dislocated and resumed through a clitic. In microcontact situations, i.e. in contact between Romance languages, as well as in many spoken varieties, topics are sometimes marked via DOM: if the object is topicalized, it will get a marker; this marker is mostly attributed to animate and definite object, but this does not need to be the case. In this talk, I will speculate on the idea that these two ways of marking are the result of a strategy that speakers use to establish a long-distance dependency, and specifically to mark the crossing of a phase of an internal argument. If this analysis holds, we expect an asymmetry between subjects and objects, in that subjects should receive much less markers (or clitics): this is in fact borne out. I will present data from old Italo-Romance varieties, as well as modern spoken substandard varieties and heritage varieties supporting this claim.

Speaker

Roberta D'Alessandro is professor of Syntax and Language Variation at Utrecht University, editor in chief of *Isogloss*, *Open Journal of Romance Linguistics*, and editor of *Open Generative Syntax* (Language Science Press), and *Skeches and grammars of the Romance languages* (Brill). She received her PhD from Stuttgart University in 2004, then held positions at Microsoft (Seattle, USA), the University of Cambridge (UK), UQAM and Leiden University. She is PI of an ERC consolidator project entitled *Microcontact. Language variation and change from the Italian heritage perspective*.

Her interests include agreement, auxiliary selection, DOM, null subjects and deixis, the syntax-PF interface; her work spans from contact linguistics to dialectology, and it is mainly on (Italo-)Romance syntax.

All are Welcome