

Alexander Williams

Assistant Professor
Departments of Linguistics and Philosophy, University of Maryland
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Education

University of Pennsylvania PhD 2005 Linguistics
Princeton University BA 1992 Philosophy summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa

Positions

Assistant Professor	Departments of Linguistics and Philosophy, University of Maryland	2009–
Assistant Professor Faculty Fellow	Linguistics Program, University of Georgia Institute for Artificial Intelligence, University of Georgia	2008–2009
Postdoctoral Fellow	Department of Linguistics, University of Maryland	2005–2008
Instructor	Department of Linguistics, Swarthmore College	Spring 2005
Instructor	English Department, Temple University	Fall 2004

Research areas

Verb semantics, Philosophy of language, Syntactic theory
Causative complex predicates, Implicit arguments
Chinese, Igbo, Tibeto-Burman and Turkic languages

Dissertation

Title	Complex causatives and verbal valence
Advisor	David Embick
Committee	Robin Clark, Maribel Romero

Teaching

U. Maryland	Graduate seminars Fall 2013, Spring 2008 Ling. 819: Categorical, Tree-Adjoining, Type-Logical and Minimalist Grammars Spring 2013 Phil. 808: Implicit Content Fall 2009 Ling. 879: Verbs and Arguments
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U. Maryland	Regular graduate courses Fall 2012, Spring 2010 Ling. 663: Pragmatics Ling. 661: Issues in Semantics Spring 2012, Spring 2011, Spring 2007, Spring 2006 Undergraduate courses Fall 2013, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Fall 2010, Fall 2009 Phil. 360: Philosophy of Language Spring 2014, Spring 2013, Spring 2012, Fall 2010 Ling. 410: Grammar and Meaning Spring 2014 Phil. 408: Implicit Meaning Spring 2011 Phil. 408: Natural Language and Metaphysics Spring 2010 Phil. 408: Events and Language Spring 2008 Ling. 411: Comparative Syntax Spring 2008, Fall 2006, Fall 2005 Ling. 311: Syntax 1
U. Georgia	Spring 2009 Ling. 8080, Graduate Compositional Semantics Spring 2009 Ling. 8150, Graduate Generative Syntax Fall 2008 Ling. 3150, Undergraduate Generative Syntax
Swarthmore C.	Spring 2005 Ling. 40: Semantics Spring 2005 Ling. 50: Syntax
Temple U.	Fall 2004 Eng. 111: Introduction to Linguistics
U. Pennsylvania	Summer 2002, Fall 2001 Ling. 106: Introduction to Formal Linguistics

Books

In revision	<i>Argument Structure</i> Cambridge University Press, “Key Topics in Syntax” series
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Papers

- 2014 Agents in Mandarin and Igbo Resultatives. *Chinese Syntax in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective*, ed. Audrey Li, Andrew Simpson, and Wei-Tian Dylan Tsai, Oxford University Press.
- 2013 Causal VVs in Mandarin. *Handbook of Chinese Linguistics*, ed. James C.T. Huang, Audrey Li, and Andrew Simpson. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Minor revisions Objects in resultatives. (MP004, Natural Language and Linguistic Theory)
- 2012 Null Complement Anaphors as definite descriptions. *Proceedings of SALT 22*.
- 2009 Themes, cumulativity, and resultatives. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40.4
- 2009 Constructions on holiday (with J. Lidz). *Cognitive Linguistics* 20.1.
- 2008 Word order in resultatives. *Proceedings of WCCFL 26*.
- 2008 Patients in Igbo and Mandarin. *Event Structures in Linguistic Form and Interpretation*, ed. J. Dölling et al.. Mouton de Gruyter.
- 2006 On the lack of reflexive benefactives in Kannada (with J. Lidz). In T. Battacharya (ed.), *Yearbook of South Asian Languages and Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- 2004 C-locality and the interaction of reflexives and ditransitives in Kannada (with J. Lidz), *Proceedings of NELS 34*.
- 2002 Predemonstrative modifiers. In S.-W. Tang and C.-S. L. Liu (eds.), *On the Formal Way to Chinese Languages*. Stanford, CA: CSLI.
- 2002 Reflexivity and resultatives (with J. Lidz). In L. Mikkelsen and C. Potts (eds.), *Proceedings of the 21st West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.
- 2000 Null subjects in Middle English existentials. In S. Pintzuk et al. (eds.), *Diachronic Syntax: Models and Mechanisms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 2000 Adverbial quantification over (interrogative) complements. In R. Billerey and B.D. Lillehaugen (eds.), *Proceedings of the 19th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.
- 1999 Context variables and Mandarin demonstratives. In M.C. Gruber et al. (eds.), *CLS 34 Part 1: Papers from the main session*. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.

Advising

- PhD chair Michaël Gagnon, Anaphors and the Missing Link, *Linguistics* 2013

PhD committee	<p>Linguistics</p> <p>Alexis Wellwood, 2014</p> <p>Angela Xiaoxue He, 2014</p> <p>Bradley Larson, <i>The Syntax of Non-syntactic Dependencies</i>, 2013</p> <p>Alex Drummond, <i>Binding Phenomena Within a Reductionist Theory of Grammatical Dependencies</i>, 2011</p> <p>Tim Hunter, <i>Relating Movement and Adjunction in Syntax and Semantics</i>, 2010</p> <p>Scott Fults, <i>The structure of comparatives: An investigation of gradable adjectives</i>, 2006</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>Yu Izumi, <i>An Essay on the Semantics of Proper Names</i>, 2011</p>
Qualifying Committee	<p>Linguistics</p> <p>Kaitlyn Harrigan, <i>Children's Acquisition of Attitude Verbs</i>, 2013</p> <p>Alexis Wellwood, <i>More</i>, 2012</p> <p>Chris LaTerza, <i>Floating Reciprocals</i>, 2011</p> <p>Michaël Gagnon, <i>Re-Cooper-ation: Towards a semantic account of pronouns as descriptions</i>, 2011</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>Andrew Knoll, 2012</p> <p>Chris Vogel, 2011</p>
Advisor	<p>Linguistics</p> <p>Allyson Ettinger, 2013– (with V. Hacquard and C. Phillips)</p> <p>Zoe Schlueter, <i>Linguistics</i>, 2012– (with E. Lau)</p> <p>Michaël Gagnon, 2010–13 (with V. Hacquard)</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>Michael McCourt, 2012–</p> <p>Quinn Harr, 2011–</p> <p>Deepak Mirchandani, 2011–13</p>

Service

Reviewing	<p>Journals: <i>Linguistics and Philosophy</i>, <i>Natural Language and Linguistic Theory</i>, <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i>, <i>Language</i>, <i>Journal of Semantics</i>, <i>Lingua</i>, <i>Morphology</i>, <i>Journal of East Asian Linguistics</i>, <i>Canadian Review of Linguistics</i></p> <p>Books: <i>Chinese Syntax in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective</i> (Oxford), <i>Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Language</i> (Routledge), <i>Complex Predicates</i> (Cambridge)</p> <p>Conferences: SALT (Planning Committee), MACSIM (Executive Committee), WCCFL, Penn Linguistics Colloquium, N. Amer. Conf. in Chinese Linguistics</p>
Editing	Chief editor, University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics, 1999–2003
Committees	<p>Syntax Search Committee, U. Maryland Linguistics, 2013-14</p> <p>Graduate Affairs Committee, U. Maryland Philosophy, 2013–14</p> <p>Faculty Advisory Committee, U. Maryland Linguistics, 2012–</p> <p>Collegiate Council, College of Arts and Humanities, U. Maryland, 2009–11</p> <p>Advisory Committee, Linguistics Program, U. Georgia, 2008</p> <p>Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Linguistics Program, U. Georgia, 2008</p> <p>Syntax Search Committee, Department of Linguistics, U. Pennsylvania, 2000</p>

Presentations

March 2014	<p>CUNY Conference on Sentence Processing, poster</p> <p>‘Implicit Agents in Short Passives and Remote Control of Reason Clauses,’ with Mike McCourt, Aleksandra Fazlipour and Ellen Lau</p>
March 2014	<p>38th Penn Linguistics Colloquium, talk</p> <p>‘Participant structure in event perception: Towards the acquisition of implicitly 3-place predicates,’ with Alexis Wellwood, Angela He and Jeff Lidz</p>
November 2013	<p>Boston University Conference on Language Development, poster</p> <p>‘Assessing event perception in adults and prelinguistic children: A prelude to syntactic bootstrapping,’ with Angela He, Alexis Wellwood and Jeff Lidz</p>
May 2012	<p>Semantics and Linguistic Theory 22, conference talk</p> <p>‘Null Complement Anaphors as definite descriptions’</p>
March 2012	<p>University of Pennsylvania linguistics colloquium, invited talk</p> <p>‘Agents of change’</p>
January 2012	<p>University of Maryland, Winter Storm, invited talk</p> <p>‘Verb grammar in philosophy and language acquisition’</p>
February 2009	<p>University of Maryland, job talk</p> <p>‘Getting involved in change’</p>
November 2008	<p>SUNY Stony Brook linguistics colloquium, invited talk</p> <p>‘Patients in resultatives’</p>

- April 2008 North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL) 20
'Themes, cumulativity, and resultatives in Mandarin'
- February 2008 MIT Department of Linguistics, job talk
'Grammatical basics in resultatives'
- February 2008 University of Georgia Linguistics Program, job talk
'Arguments in complex causatives'
- April 2007 West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 26
'Word order in resultatives'
- February 2007 UCLA Department of Linguistics, job talk
'Verbs and arguments: lessons from Mandarin'
- February 2007 University of Maryland Department of Linguistics, job talk
'Objects in causatives'
- March 2006 University of Delaware Department of Linguistics, invited talk
'The simple story of complex causatives'
- April 2005 University of Maryland Department of Linguistics, invited talk
'Complex causatives and verbal valence'
- March 2004 Workshop on Event Structure in Linguistic Form and Interpretation, U. Leipzig
'Patients in Igbo and Mandarin'
- February 2004 University of Chicago Department of Linguistics, job talk
'Valence and resultatives in Mandarin and Igbo'
- January 2004 Linguistic Society of America (LSA), 78th annual meeting
'Intransitive resultatives and Igbo'
- November 2003 North Eastern Linguistic Society (NELS), 34th annual meeting
'C-locality and the interaction of reflexives and ditransitives' (with J. Lidz)
- October 2003 South Asian Language Analysis (SALA) Roundtable 23
'Reflexives and ditransitives in Kannada' (with J. Lidz)
- April 2002 West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 21
'Reflexivity and resultatives' (with J. Lidz)
- January 2002 Linguistic Society of America (LSA), 76th annual meeting
'The causative structure of resultatives' (with J. Lidz)
- June 2001 International Association of Chinese Linguistics (IACL), 10th annual conference
'Verb-verb compounds and causativity in Mandarin'
- March 2001 Penn Linguistics Colloquium (PLC), 25th annual
'Verb-verb compounds and causativity in Mandarin'
- February 2000 West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 19
'Adverbial quantification over (interrogative) complements'
- April 1999 West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 18
'Null expletives in Early Middle English existentials'

June 1998	Diachronic Issues in Generative Syntax (DIGS) 5 'Null subjects in Early Middle English existentials'
March 1998	Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS), 34th annual meeting 'Context variables and Mandarin demonstratives'
December 1997	On the Formal Way to Chinese Languages 'Predemonstrative modifiers'

Fellowships and awards

2013	College of Arts and Humanities DRIF award, \$500 in conference support for the Second PHLING Colloquium (PHLINC2), with V. Hacquard and E. Eaker
2012	College of Arts and Humanities DRIF award, \$2K in conference support for the Second Mid-Atlantic Colloquium for Studies in Meaning, with V. Hacquard
2010	Research and Scholarship Award, \$10K summer research support, University of Maryland
2003–2004	Dissertation year fellowship, University of Pennsylvania
2000–2002	William Penn Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania
1997–2000	Dolores Zohrab Liebmann fellowship
1996–1997	Andrew W. Mellon fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Foundation
1992	Prize for best senior thesis in logic and epistemology, and half prize for best senior thesis in philosophy overall, Princeton University
1992	Phi Beta Kappa

Assistantships

Summer 2004	Expedition assistant to Prof. K.D. Harrison, Swarthmore College Assisted in field work on Tuvan in western Mongolia 'Altai-Sayan Language and Ethnography Project,' Volkswagen-Stiftung
2002–2003	Research assistant to Prof. A. Lloyd, University of Pennsylvania 'Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen' (Etymological dictionary of Old High German)
Summer 2002	Research assistant to Prof. D. Embick, University of Pennsylvania 'Syntax and Verb Meaning: A study of causation in Igbo verbal alternations' University of Pennsylvania University Research Foundation grant
Summer 1998	Uyghur and Mandarin translator for Prof. C. Chang, Sweet Briar College Chang's NSF grant #9603661: "The Social Evolution of Eurasian Steppe Communities in Southeastern Kazakhstan and the Rise of Ancient Civilizations."