

Curriculum Vitae
Douglas C. Merchant
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Department of Linguistics
 University of Michigan
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EDUCATION

- 2019 Ph.D. in Linguistics, University of Georgia (UGA) Athens, GA
 SPECIALIZATIONS: Syntax, Psycholinguistics, Semantics
 PHD COMMITTEE: Tim Gup-ton, Vera Lee-Schoenfeld, Paula Schwanenflugel
 DISSERTATION: *Idioms at the interface(s): Towards a psycholinguistically grounded model of sentence generation*
- 2013 B.A. in Linguistics w/ Honors, University of Arizona (UA) Tucson, AZ
 MINORS: Arabic, English Literature
 HONORS THESIS ADVISOR: Tom Bever
 HONORS THESIS: *Effects of familial handedness on language processing*

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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| 2026- | <i>LEO Lecturer II</i> | Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan (U-M) |
| 2026 | <i>Lecturer</i> | Department of Linguistics, Oakland University (OU) |
| 2022-26 | <i>LEO Lecturer I</i> | Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan |
| 2021 | <i>Lecturer</i> | Department of Linguistics, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) |
| 2020 | <i>Visiting Researcher</i> | Department of Romance Languages, University of Georgia (UGA) |
| 2019-21 | <i>Lecturer</i> | Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern Languages, San Diego State University (SDSU) |

RESEARCH

Refereed journal articles

Gupton, T., & Merchant, D.C. (Accepted). On the acceptability of agreeing infinitives in Brazilian Portuguese. *Applied Psycholinguistics*.

Merchant, D.C., & Gupton, T. (2025). Processing dissociations between raising and control in Brazilian Portuguese. *Journal of Linguistics* 61. DOI: [10.1017/s002222672400001x](https://doi.org/10.1017/s002222672400001x).

Merchant, D.C. (2022). What's in the bucket? Aspectual (non)compositionality in phrasal idioms. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 40 (4), 1117 - 1158. DOI: [10.1007/s11049-021-09528-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11049-021-09528-9).

Merchant, D.C. (2019). Syntax from above: Towards a top-down, phase-theoretic model of sentence generation. *UGA Working Papers in Linguistics* 4. Linguistics Society at UGA: Athens, GA, 47–68.

Dissertation

Merchant, D.C. (2019). *Idioms at the interface(s): Towards a psycholinguistically grounded model of sentence generation*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia dissertation.

Manuscripts in draft form

Merchant, D.C. (ms.). Group differences in semantic activation during idiom processing.

Manuscripts in preparation

Merchant, D.C. (ms.). Thematic structure and thematic role assignment in semantically unaccusative and unergative idioms.

Book reviews

Merchant, D.C. (2021). *The role of constituents in multiword expressions: An interdisciplinary, crosslinguistic perspective*. Edited by Sabine Schulte im Walde and Eva Smolka. In *LinguistList*: <http://linguistlist.org/issues/32/32-1302.html>.

TEACHING¹*University of Michigan*

LING 303	Figurative Language	2024-26 (2 sections)
LING 497	Children's Language Acquisition - CAPSTONE	2024-27 (3)
†LING 315	Introduction to Syntax - WRITING INTENSIVE	2023-26 (3)
LING 315	Introduction to Syntax	2022-25 (3)
LING 495	Independent Study - HONORS THESIS	2025
LING 210	Introduction to Linguistic Analysis	2023-27 (8)
†LING 106	First Language Acquisition	2022-25 (3)
†LING 114	World of Words	2022-27 (10 / 5 virtual)
LING 193	Word Whizzes (Lexical Acquisition)	2022-26 (4)
†LING 209	Language and Human Mind	2022

Oakland University (MI)

*LIN 4335	Psycholinguistics	2026 (virtual/asynchronous)
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University of California, Los Angeles

†LING 120B	Syntax I	2021 (virtual)
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San Diego State University

LING 552	Psycholinguistics	2021 (virtual)
LING 452	[First] Language Acquisition	2021 (2 sections; virtual)
*LING 501	Fundamentals of Linguistics	2021 (virtual)
*LING 522	Introduction to Syntax	2019-21 (3 / 1 virtual)

University of Georgia

LING 2100H	Study of Language - HONORS	2018-19 (4)
LING 3150	Generative Syntax	2016-18 (3)
LING 2100	Study of Language	2015-18 (9)

¹ All courses taught as instructor of record

† Supervised / mentored teaching assistants / graduate student instructors

* Split-level graduate / undergraduate course

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Invited talks

- 2019 'Down the up staircase: Reversing the directionality of incremental structure-building'. **Invited talk w/ honorarium.** *Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern Languages, San Diego State University.* San Diego, CA. November 4.
- 2018 'You can't get blood from a stone: The semantic inertness of phrasal idioms in sentence generation'. **Invited talk.** *Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra Semana de la Investigación (Research Week).* Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic (virtual). November 8.

Refereed Conference Presentations

- 2024 'Thematic role assignment in phrasal idioms'. *Encuentro de Lingüística Formal V.* Puebla, Mexico. September 5.
- 2021 'Processing of empty categories in Brazilian Portuguese' - with Tim Gupton of UGA. *Going Romance 2021.* Amsterdam (virtual). December 3.
- 2020 'Plausibility denied: Semantic activation in the cerebral hemispheres during idiom processing'. *Experiments in Linguistic Meaning 1 (ELM 1).* Philadelphia, PA (virtual). September 16-18.
- 2020 'Kicking the bucket and other unlikely events: On the (non)compositionality of inner aspect in phrasal idioms'. *Events and Event Structure at the Limits of Grammar Workshop.* Oxford, UK (virtual). September 15-16.
- 2019 'Castles made of sand: The semantic inertness of idiom components in sentence generation'. *Southeastern Conference on Linguistics (SECOL).* Boca Raton, FL, May 30 - June 2.

- 2018 'Later, alligator! The postsyntactic insertion of idioms (and everything else)'. *Fifth Annual Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia (LCUGA 5)*. Athens, GA. October 12-13.
- 2017 'Herding cats: A late insertion account of the syntactic mobility of phrasal idioms'. *Arizona Linguistics Circle 11 (ALC 11)*. Tucson, AZ. October 20-22.
- 2015 'Functional dissociations between production and comprehension: The case of Distributed Morphology'. *Second Annual Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia (LCUGA 2)*. Athens, GA. October 9-11.
- 2014 'Differences in semantic processing as a function of sex and familial handedness'. *First Annual Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia (LCUGA 1)*. Athens, GA. October 24-26.

Other Presentations

- 2024 'Processing of literally plausible and implausible idioms: A divided visual field study.' *Psycholinguistics Discussion Group, University of Michigan (U-M) Department of Linguistics*. Ann Arbor, MI. April 1.
- 2023 'Semantic constraints on the syntax of phrasal idioms'. *Cognitive Science Seminar Series, Weinberg Institute for Cognitive Science at the University of Michigan*. Ann Arbor, MI. November 7.
- 2023 'Thematic role assignment in phrasal idioms'. *Linguistics Faculty Showcase, U-M Department of Linguistics*. Ann Arbor, MI. October 27.
- 2022 'Thematic structure in semantically unaccusative and unergative idioms'. *SynSem Discussion Group, U-M Department of Linguistics*. Ann Arbor, MI. December 9.

- 2022 ‘On the processing of control and raising in Brazilian Portuguese’. (With Tim Gupton.) *Morphology and Syntax Syndicate at Penn State*. University Park, PA (virtual). March 14.
- 2021 ‘Processing and control in Brazilian Portuguese’. (With Tim Gupton.) *Univ. of Georgia (UGA) Spring Linguistics Colloquium*. Athens, GA (virtual). April 16.
- 2021 ‘Hand-me-down syntax: Towards a top-down, phase-theoretic model of sentence generation.’ *Center for Research on Language (CRL), University of California, San Diego*. San Diego, CA (virtual). March 2.
- 2020 ‘Monotonic composition and noncompositional idioms’. *Tense and Aspect Workshop, UGA Department of Linguistics*. Athens, GA (virtual). April 17.
- 2018 ‘What goes up doesn’t actually go up: Towards a psycholinguistically plausible model of sentence generation’. *UGA Spring Ling. Colloquium*. Athens, GA. February 2.
- 2016 ‘Herding cats: A late insertion account of the syntactic behavior of phrasal idioms’. *UGA Spring Linguistics Colloquium*. Athens, GA. April 8.
- 2015 ‘To each his own: Idiolectal variation in the syntacto-semantic representations of phrasal idioms’. *UGA Spring Linguistics Colloquium*. Athens, GA. April 24.
- 2014 ‘An introduction to psycholinguistics and eyetracking as a research paradigm’. Invited guest lecture, *Seminar in Linguistic Theory: Language Acquisition and Universal Grammar (UGA)*. Athens, GA. March 31.

MEDIA

- 2024 Interviewed for the article [*Keeping your chin up and your eyes peeled: Body-part idioms abound in our language*](#), by Lillian King. *Toledo Blade*, January 28, 2024.

FELLOWSHIPS/ASSISTANTSHIPS

- 2018-19 Linguistics Teaching Assistantship (Dept. of Linguistics; for Honors classes)
 \$19,200 /yr. + *tuition waiver*
- 2013-18 Presidential Graduate Fellowship (The Graduate School at UGA)
 \$27,000 /yr. + *tuition waiver; awarded to ~12 new UGA students annually*

SERVICE

Peer review activities

- 2026 **Abstract reviewer.** *Linguistics Society of America (LSA).*
- 2026 **Journal manuscript reviewer.** *Journal of Linguistics.*
- 2023-26 **Judge.** *Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) Annual Research Symposium.* University of Michigan.
- 2019-21 **Reviewer / panelist.** *National Science Foundation (NSF).* (\$200/panel)
- 2019 **Journal manuscript reviewer.** *Lingua.*
- 2014-18 **Abstract reviewer.** *Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia.*
- 2014 **Best Paper reviewer.** *Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities (CURO).* University of Georgia.

Other service / activities

- 2022-25 **Participant / presenter.** *SynSem and Psycholinguistics Discussion Groups*
 Dept. of Linguistics, U-M.
- 2023 **Participant / presenter.** *Cognitive Science Seminar Series.* Weinberg Institute
 for Cognitive Science at the University of Michigan (U-M).
- 2016 **Co-Chair.** *Third Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia (LCUGA 3).*
- 2014-18 **Conference committee.** *Linguistics Conference at the University of Georgia.*
- 2014-2017 **Vice-President.** *Linguistics Society at the University of Georgia (LSUGA).*
- 2015-2018 **Co-organizer.** *Syntax Reading Group.* UGA.
- 2014-2016 **Organizer / founder.** *Psycholinguistics Reading Group.* UGA.

2014 **Co-organizer / co-founder.** *Eyetracking Reading Group.* UGA.

AWARDS / HONORARIA

2022 Michigan Housing Honored Instructor (Student-initiated nomination)
 2019 Honorarium for invited talk. Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern
 Languages, SDSU (\$500)
 2017 UGA Graduate School Travel Funding (\$350)
 2017 UGA Linguistics Department Travel Funding (\$150)
 2012-13 UA Laura and Arch Brown Honors Scholarship (\$1000)

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP ACTIVITIES

2014-15 Transcribed morphophonological data in Chaga (a Bantu language)
 2013-15 Proofread a book on Serbo-Croatian lexical and phonological variation; annotated
 related sound files in Praat
 2013-14 Conducted literature reviews and organized a reading group on eyetracking technology
 and methodology
 2013-14 Transcribed audio/video intonation for systemic functional linguistics project

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

<i>Intermediate</i>	Spanish
<i>Intermediate (reading)</i>	Modern Standard Arabic
<i>Basic (reading)</i>	Portuguese, German, Latin, French
<i>Other (minor) exposure</i>	Luiseño, Serbo-Croatian, Chaga

SOFTWARE SKILLS

<i>Intermediate/Advanced</i>	E-Prime, SPSS, Minitab, MS Word
<i>Proficient</i>	MS Excel, GIMP, DMDX, Praat
<i>Some exposure</i>	R, Python

MEMBERSHIP AND CERTIFICATIONS

Linguistics Society of America (LSA)

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI):

Social and Behavioral Research; Social & Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research

REFERENCES

Timothy M. Gupton (Professor)

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Betty Samraj (Professor, former Dept. Chair)

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