



Die Wiener Sprachgesellschaft lädt zu folgendem Vortrag herzlich ein:

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### “Syntactic ergativity as a constraint against crossing-dependencies”

(joint work with Rebecca Tollan)

**Abstract:** The absolutive inversion account of syntactic ergativity maintains that the position of the absolutive object above the merge site of the ergative subject renders the ergative subject inaccessible to movement (Murusagi 1992, Bittner and Hale 1995, Aldridge 2004; Coon et al. 2014, Coon et al. 2019, and others). Tollan and Clemens (to appear) builds on this theory of syntactic ergativity by revisiting the question of *why* absolutive inversion results in the inability of the ergative argument to undergo A'-bar movement. In this talk, I will present our account of syntactic ergativity, which is based on the grammaticalization of a processing-based preference for nested as compared to crossing dependencies. More precisely, ergative subject extraction restrictions arise, because such movement would cross the prior A'-movement path of the absolutive object and create an illicit crossed dependency. We further predict that arguments merged between the A-movement tails of the absolutive DP cannot extract, whereas arguments merged above or below them can. In developing an approach to syntactic ergativity grounded in sentence processing, we highlight the need for deeper conversation between formal, typological, and processing-driven syntax.

Zeit: **Dienstag, 26. 04. 2022, 18.30h**

Ort: Online (via Zoom). Der Zugangscode für die Teilnahme an dieser Veranstaltung wird elektronisch übermittelt.

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