

DLLL, Lecture Series in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics

Thursday, November 28, 2013

5:15-6:15 pm

Room Ross S 562

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## **Non-canonical Agreement in Copular Contexts**

*In this talk we investigate cross-linguistic variation in the morphosyntax of copular clauses, focusing on agreement patterns in double NP constructions [NP1 BE NP2], with data mainly from Persian and Eastern Armenian. Our starting point is an alternation between NP1 and NP2 agreement, which arises both within and across languages (Costa 1994, Moro 1997, den Dikken 1998, Heycock 2012). This alternation is typically taken to be confined to specificational (i.e. inverted) clauses, and previous analyses have strongly identified NP2 agreement with the syntax of inversion. However, we show that NP2 agreement is attested in a broader range of contexts, specifically in (assumed identity) equative contexts, suggesting that it should not be correlated with specificational syntax.*

*We argue that the agreement alternation is better understood as a person sensitivity not unlike hierarchy effects that have been identified in regular transitive contexts in languages with complex inflectional morphology.*

**\*Reception to follow in the DLLL lounge\***