

Ksenia Ershova

UCL Linguistics
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Research Interests

Syntax; morphology; argument alignment; polysynthesis; ergativity; field linguistics; linguistic typology; indigenous languages of the Caucasus; Austronesian languages.

Academic Positions

2024-	Associate Professor Department of Linguistics, University College London
2022-2024	Postdoctoral Associate Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2019-2022	Lecturer & Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar in the Humanities Department of Linguistics & Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University

Education

2013-2019	PhD in Linguistics, University of Chicago Dissertation: <i>Syntactic Ergativity in West Circassian</i> Committee chair: Karlos Arregi
2007-2012	Specialist Degree in Linguistics, Russian State University for the Humanities

Non-degree programs:

2016	Language School of Georgian, Tbilisi, Georgia
2015	LSA Summer Institute, University of Chicago
2011	LOT Summer School, Leuven, Belgium

Grants and Fellowships

External Support

2018-2019	National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant <i>Syntactic Ergativity in West Circassian</i> , BCS-1749299 (PI: Karlos Arregi)
2017	Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies Dissertation Research Grant

Internal Support

2019-2022	Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities at Stanford University
2018-2019	Mellon Foundation-University of Chicago Dissertation Completion Fellowship
2017	Graduate Research Aid Initiative in Linguistics, University of Chicago

2016 (summer)	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for Georgian
2015	Rella Cohn Fund for Graduate Research in Linguistics, University of Chicago
2014-2015	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for Georgian
2013-2014	Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for Georgian

Participation in Funded Projects

2012-2013	Russian Foundation for the Humanities, grant No. 12-34-01345 (<i>The Syntax of Non-finite Verbal Predication</i>)
2011-2012	Foundation for Fundamental Linguistic Research (in Russia), grant No. A-23 (<i>Grammatical Description of Dargwa Dialects</i>)

Publications

In progress

minor revisions	Ershova, Ksenia and Itamar Francez. From quotation to concession: The case of East Circassian. Invited submission to <i>On the diachrony of adverbial clauses</i> (ed. Łukasz Jędrzejowski).
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Peer-reviewed journal publications

to appear	Ershova, Ksenia. No logic in conflicting requirements: Reply to Branen 2023. In <i>Syntactic Theory and Research</i> . Ershova, Ksenia (to appear). Disentangling syntactic ergativity from constraints on ergative displacement. In <i>Language</i> .
2024	Ershova, Ksenia (2024) Phasehood as defective intervention: Possessor extraction and selective DP islandhood in West Circassian. In <i>Syntax</i> 27, 314-359.
2023	Ershova, Ksenia (2023) Syntactic ergativity and the theory of subjecthood: Evidence from anaphor binding in West Circassian. In <i>Language</i> 99(2), 193-241.
2021	Ershova, Ksenia (2021) Diagnosing clause structure in a polysynthetic language: Wh-agreement and parasitic gaps in West Circassian. In <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 52(1), 1-38.
2020	Ershova, Ksenia (2020) Two paths to polysynthesis: The view from West Circassian nominalizations. In <i>Natural Language & Linguistic Theory</i> 38(2), 425-475.

Peer-reviewed chapters and proceedings

2026	Ershova, Ksenia. West Circassian lessons on Phase Theory. In Balkız Öztürk (ed). <i>Theoretical Issues in the Languages of the Caucasus</i> , 339-370. John Benjamins.
2013	Ershova, Ksenia (2013) Reported speech and reportative grammaticalization in Besleney Kabardian. In Surányi, Balász (ed). <i>Proceedings of the Second Central European Conference in Linguistics for Postgraduate Students</i> , 71-87. Budapest: Pázmány Péter Catholic University.

Conference proceedings

2024	Ershova, Ksenia (2024) Phi-feature mismatches in Samoan resumptives as post-syntactic impoverishment. Kutay Serova and M.K. Snigaroff (eds.) <i>Proceedings of the Chicago Linguistic Society</i> , 87-102.
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- 2022 Ershova, Ksenia (2022) Configurationality in Polysynthesis: Weak Crossover in West Circassian. In Aitha, Akshay, Steven Castro, and Brianna Wilson (eds.) *Proceedings of the Chicago Linguistic Society* (2020), 79-94.
- 2018 Ershova, Ksenia (2018) High absolutive in West Circassian: Evidence from parasitic gaps. In Hucklebridge, Sherry and Max Nelson (eds.) *Proceedings of the Northeast Linguistic Society*, vol.1.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2018) West Circassian Polysynthesis at the Morphology-Syntax Interface. In Farrell, Patrick (ed.) *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America*, vol.3, 39:1-15
- 2017 Ershova, Ksenia (2017) Unaccusativity and the syntax of imperatives in East Circassian. In Farrell, Patrick (ed.) *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America*, vol.2, 36:1-14.
- 2016 Ershova, Ksenia (2016) Puti grammatikalizacii glagola ž'əʔe- 'govorit' v besleneevskom dialekte kabardino-čerkeksskogo jazyka [Grammaticalization paths of the verb ž'əʔe- 'say' in the Besleney dialect of the Kabardian language]. In Kazansky N.N. (ed.) *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* XII, part 1, 82-88. St. Petersburg: Nauka.
- 2015 Ershova, Ksenia (2015) Non-canonical noun incorporation in Bzhedug Adyghe. In A.E. Jurgensen, H. Sande, S. Lamoureaux, K. Baclawski, and A. Zerbe (eds.) *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society*, 99-119. BLS.
- 2013 Ershova, Ksenia (2013) Imennye i glagol'nye svojstva besleneevskogo masdara [Nominal and verbal features of the Besleney masdar]. In Bak D.P. and V.V. Minaev (eds.) *Polevyje issledovaniya studentov RGGU* VIII, 245-265. Moscow: RGGU.
- 2011 Ershova, Ksenia (2011) Besleneevskij masdar kak smešannaja kategorija [The Besleney masdar as a mixed category]. In Kazansky N.N. (ed.) *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* VII, part 3, 289-295. St. Petersburg: Nauka.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2011) Imennye sočinitelnye konstrukcii i gruppovoe oformlenie v adyghejskom jazyke [Nominal coordinate constructions and group inflection in Adyghe]. In Bak D.P. and V.V. Minaev (eds.) *Polevyje issledovaniya studentov RGGU* VII, 195-207. Moscow: RGGU.
- 2010 Ershova, Ksenia (2010) Sojuznye formy glagolov v adyghejskom jazyke: Sočinenie ili podčinenie? [The so-called "conjunctive" verb forms in Adyghe: coordination or subordination?]. In Kazansky N.N. (ed.) *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* VI, part 3, 58-63. St. Petersburg: Nauka.
- 2009 Ershova, Ksenia (2009) Upotreblenie evenkijskix sobiratelnyx čislitel'nyx v pos'olkax Tutončany i Kislokan [The usage of Evenki collective numerals in the villages Tutonchany and Kislokan]. In Bak D.P. and V.V. Minaev (eds.) *Polevyje issledovaniya studentov RGGU* IV, 415-429. Moscow: RGGU.

Edited volumes

- 2016 **Ershova, Ksenia**, Joshua Falk, Jeffrey Geiger, Zachary Hebert, Robert E. Lewis Jr., Patrick Munoz, Jacob B. Phillips, and Betsy Pillion, eds. (2016) *Proceedings of the Fifty-First Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*. CLS.

Presentations

Invited talks

- 2026 Ershova, Ksenia (2026) Where you're pronounced is not where you are: Rules of argument incorporation in West Circassian nominalizations. Presented at the Surrey Linguistics Circle, University of Surrey, 25 February 2026.
- 2025 Ershova, Ksenia (2025) Inherent ergative case and the typology of external arguments. Presented at Morpho-Syntax-Semantics Colloquium, University of Postdam, 27 May 2025.

- Ershova, Ksenia (2025) The imperfect correlation between morphological exponence and syntactic structure: Two case studies from West Circassian. Presented at Université Paris 8-CNRS, 28 April 2025.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2025) Phases in the syntax and at the interfaces: Lessons from polysynthesis. Presented at QMUL Guest Speaker Seminar Series, Queen Mary University of London, 19 February 2025.
- 2024 **Ershova, Ksenia** and Nikita Bezrukov (2024) Moving away from antilocality: A defense of very local movement. Presented at LASER Workshop, Göttingen University, 9-11 April 2024.
- 2023 Ershova, Ksenia (2023) What's in a (polysynthetic) phase: Dynamic domains, spellout and locality. Presented at CYCLOPS-Colloquium, Leipzig University, 13 December 2023.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2023) The nuanced typology of syntactic ergativity: Insights from parasitic gaps in Samoan and West Circassian. Presented at Rutgers University (January 27), University of Washington (February 17), University of Maryland (April 6), the Leibniz-Center for General Linguistics in Berlin (April 12), University College London (April 19), and Leipzig University (December 12).
- Ershova, Ksenia (2023) The interaction between movement, licensing, and spell-out: What c-commands what in West Circassian nominalizations. Presented at UMass Syntax Workshop, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 3 March 2023.
- 2022 Ershova, Ksenia (2022) Unexpected consequences of polysynthesis: deficient probes, dynamic phases and the role of C. Presented at the Penn Linguistics Speaker Series, University of Pennsylvania, 20 October 2022.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2022) Unexpected $\bar{A}$ -movement in West Circassian: Theoretical implications for syntactic ergativity. Presented at the Princeton Symposium on Syntactic Theory, Princeton University, 1-2 April 2022.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2022) Contextually determined islandhood and constraints on possessor extraction in West Circassian. Presented at NYU Brown Bag series, NYU, 25 March 2022.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2022) Unexpected ergativity: Wh-agreeing possessors in West Circassian. Department talk presented at Harvard University, 11 February 2022.
- 2021 Ershova, Ksenia (2021) What a polysynthetic language can tell us about wh-movement and Phase Theory: Possessor extraction in West Circassian. Presented at S-Circle, UC Santa Cruz, 4 June 2021.
- 2020 Ershova, Ksenia (2020) What it means to be a subject: Evidence from a syntactically ergative language. Colloquium talk presented at the University of Southern California, 7 February 2020.
- 2019 Ershova, Ksenia (2019) Subjecthood and syntactic ergativity: Evidence from anaphors in West Circassian. Presented at SMircle, Stanford University, 4 October 2019.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2019) Finding configurationality in polysynthesis: Wh-agreement as a diagnostic for clause structure in West Circassian. Presented at the Syntax & Semantics Circle, UC Berkeley, 20 September 2019.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2019) Subjecthood and syntactic ergativity: Evidence from anaphors in West Circassian. Presented at University of Connecticut, 1 February 2019.

Conference presentations

- 2026 Ershova, Ksenia (2026) Three argument hierarchies in West Circassian and how movement can explain them. 59th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea, Universität Osnabrück, 26-29 August.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2026) When prosody parades as syntax: Spurious syntactic ergativity in Samoan. Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS 62), University of Chicago, 17-19 April.
- 2025 **Ershova, Ksenia** and Nikita Bezrukov (2025) West Circassian bare nouns are full DPs: Evidence from nominal possession. Caucasian Linguistics: Recent Advances and Emerging Topics, Université Lumière Lyon 2, 11-13 July.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2025) You can have the cake and eat it too: Reconciling UTAH and inherent ergative case. Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS 61), University of Chicago, 9-11 May.

- 2024 Ershova, Ksenia (2024) Syntactic ergativity without ‘syntactic ergativity’. The 55th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, Yale University, 17-18 October.
- Ershova, Ksenia** and Satyawidya Wulansari (2024) Covert passive agents in Jakarta Indonesian: Unpronounced or missing? The 16th Conference on Austronesian and Papuan Languages and Linguistics (APLL16), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1-3 July.
- 2023 Ershova, Ksenia (2023) Phi-feature mismatches in Samoan resumptives as post-syntactic impoverishment. Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS 59), University of Chicago, 28-30 April.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2023) Licensed to license: Deficient probes in West Circassian nominalizations. The 46th Conference of Generative Linguistics in the Old World, University of Vienna, Austria, 12-14 April.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2023) Ergatives are special: Parasitic resumptives and the Ergative Extraction Constraint in Samoan. Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Society of America, Denver CO, 5-8 January.
- 2021 Ershova, Ksenia (2021) Configurationality in Polysynthesis: Weak Crossover in West Circassian. Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society (CLS 57), online, May 6-8.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2021) Multiple feature inheritance makes polysynthesis: Evidence from West Circassian nominalizations. Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Society of America, online, 7-10 January.
- 2020 Yuan, Michelle and **Ksenia Ershova** (2020) Dependent case in syntactically ergative languages: Evidence from Inuit and West Circassian. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, New Orleans LA, 2-5 January.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2020) The role of voice in establishing control: Evidence from a syntactically ergative language. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, New Orleans LA, 2-5 January.
- 2019 Ershova, Ksenia (2019) Reflexives in West Circassian: Ingredients of subject orientation. The 42nd Conference of Generative Linguistics in the Old World, University of Oslo, Norway, 7-11 May.
- Ershova, Ksenia** and Itamar Francez (2019) From quotation to concession: The case of East Circassian. The 41st Annual Conference of the German Linguistic Society, University of Bremen, 6-8 March.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2019) A-scrambling can feed parasitic gap licensing too. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, New York NY, 3-6 January.
- 2018 Ershova, Ksenia (2018) Anaphor binding and syntactic ergativity in West Circassian. West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics 36, UCLA, 20-22 April.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2018) West Circassian polysynthesis at the morphology-syntax interface. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Salt Lake City UT, 4-7 January.
- 2017 Ershova, Ksenia (2017) High absolutive in West Circassian: Evidence from parasitic gaps. The 48th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistic Society, University of Iceland, 27-29 October.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2017) Unaccusativity and the syntax of imperatives in East Circassian. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Austin TX, 5-8 January.
- 2016 Ershova, Ksenia (2016) Dative blocking in Georgian. South Caucasian Chalk Circle, UChicago Center in Paris, 22-24 September.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2016) Dimensions of (non)configurationality: Argument structure in Adyghe. Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Washington DC, 7-10 January.
- 2015 Ershova, Ksenia (2015) Determining the position of *v* in Adyghe: Evidence from nominalizations. 6th Annual Workshop on Nominalizations, Verona, June 30-July 1.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2015) Non-canonical noun incorporation in Bzhedug Adyghe. 41st Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society, February 7-8.
- 2014 Chernyshev, Alexander & **Ksenia Ershova** (2014) Morfoložičeskaja rekursija v adygejskix nominalizacijax [Morphological recursion in Adyghe nominalizations]. 2nd Conference in General, Nordic and Slavic linguistics for graduate and doctoral students, Moscow, October 15-17.

- 2012 Ershova, Ksenia (2012) The Besleney Masdar: Between a Noun and a Verb. Typology, Theory: Caucasus. Istanbul, Turkey, November 29 - December 1.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Puti grammatikalizacii glagola ž'əʔe- 'govorit' v besleneevskom dialekte kabardino-čerkeksskogo jazyka [Grammaticalization paths of the verb ž'əʔe- 'say' in the Besleney dialect of the Kabardian language]. IX Conference on Typology and Grammar for Young Researchers, Saint-Petersburg, November 22-24.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Gruppovoe oformlenie v adygejskom jazyke [Suspended affixation in Adyghe]. Typology of Morphosyntactic Parameters 2012, Moscow, November 14-16.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Čužaja reč v besleneevskom dialekte kabardino-čerkeksskogo jazyka [Reported speech in Besleney Kabardian]. First Conference-School in Moscow "Problems of Language: The View of Young Researchers", Moscow, September 20-22.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Reported speech in Besleney Kabardian (poster). Second Central European Conference in Linguistics for postgraduate Students, Hungary, August 24-25.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Complementation in the Besleney dialect of the Kabardian language. XII Students' International Scientific Conference, Narva, Estonia, May 3-5.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2012) Imennye i glagol'nye svojstva besleneevskogo masdara [Nominal and verbal properties of the Besleney masdar]. Field Research of the Students of the Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, February 29.
- 2011 Ershova, Ksenia (2011) Besleneevskij masdar kak smešannaja kategorija [The Besleney masdar as a mixed category]. VIII Conference on Typology and Grammar for Young Researchers, Saint-Petersburg, November 17-19.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2011) Dve konstrukcii obsojatel'stva obraza dejstvija (Ḥal) v literaturnom arabskom jazyke [Two circumstantial adverbial constructions (Ḥal) in Modern Standard Arabic]. G.A. Tkachenko Memorial Conference, Moscow, October 31.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2011) Imennye sočinitel'nye konstrukcii i gruppovoe oformlenie v adygejskom jazyke [Nominal coordinate constructions and group inflection in Adyghe]. Field Research of the Students of the Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, February 16.
- 2010 Ershova, Ksenia (2010) Sojuznye formy glagolov v adygejskom jazyke: Sočinenie ili podčinenie [The so-called "conjunctive" verb forms in Adyghe: Coordination or subordination?]. VII Conference on Typology and Grammar for Young Researchers, Saint-Petersburg, November 4-6.
- Ershova, Ksenia (2010) Ograničitel'nye genetivnye konstrukcii v literaturnom arabskom jazyke [Restrictive genitive constructions in Classical Arabic]. G.A. Tkachenko Memorial Conference, Moscow, November 1.
- 2008 Ershova, Ksenia (2008) Upotreblenie evenkijskix sobiratel'nyx čislitel'nyx v poselkax Tutončany i Kislokan [The usage of Evenki collective numerals in the villages Tutonchany and Kislokan]. Field Research of the Students of the Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, December 17-18.

Fieldwork

2026	Abkhaz (CauLaGe Summer School; Peria, Georgia)
2023-2024, 2026-	Jakarta Indonesian (Boston, MA & London, UK)
2020-2024	Samoan (Northern California; remote)
2022	Uyghur (Field Methods class, Stanford University)
2010, 2017, 2018, 2019	Temirgoy dialect of West Circassian (Adyghe, Russia)
2016	Kuban dialect of East Circassian (Adyghe, Russia)
2014-2015	Lezgian (Field Methods class, University of Chicago)
2014	Bzhedug dialect of West Circassian (Adyghe, Russia)
2011, 2012	Besleney dialect of East Circassian (Adyghe, Russia)
2011, 2012	Xuduc and Qunqi Dargwa (Dagestan, Russia)
2008	Evenki (Evenkia, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia)

Teaching Experience

University College London

2026-2027	Term 1	PLIN0047 Syntax I (MA) PLIN0088 Field Methods in Linguistics (BA/BSc Years 2-3)
	Term 2	PLIN0004/0064 Introduction to Generative Grammar B (BA/BSc Year 1)
2025-2026	Term 1	PLIN0047 Syntax I (MA) PLIN0023 Current Issues in Syntax: Ergativity (BA/BSc Year 3)
	Term 2	PLIN0004/0064 Introduction to Generative Grammar B (BA/BSc Year 1)
2024-2025	Term 1	PLIN0047 Syntax I (MA)
	Term 2	PLIN0016 Syntax Research Seminar: Phasehood (co-taught with Klaus Abels) PLIN0004/0064 Introduction to Generative Grammar B (BA/BSc Year 1)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2024 Spring	24.910: Advanced Topics in Linguistic Analysis: Argument Alignment
2023 Fall	24.956: Topics in Syntax: Antilocality
	24.909: Field Methods in Linguistics
2022 Spring	24.942: Topics in the Grammar of a Less Familiar Language (co-taught with Adam Albright)
	24.956: Topics in Syntax: Subjecthood (co-taught with Will Oxford)
2022 Fall	24.951: Introduction to Syntax (co-taught with David Pesetsky)

Stanford University

2022 Spring	LINGUIST 274B: Linguistic Field Methods II
2022 Winter	LINGUIST 274A: Linguistic Field Methods I
2021 Spring	LINGUIST 168: Introduction to Linguistic Typology
2020 Spring	LINGUIST 274B: Linguistic Field Methods II
2020 Winter	LINGUIST 274A: Linguistic Field Methods I

University of Chicago

2018 Winter	LING 20201: Introduction to Syntax
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Teaching assistant / Writing intern

2018 Spring	HUMA 17200: Language and the Human
2017 Spring	LING 20001: Intro to Linguistics
2017 Winter	LING 20201: Introduction to Syntax
2015 Fall	LING 21000: Morphology

Summer schools

2026	CauLaGe Summer School in Peria, Georgia	Course: Abkhaz+ Research supervision
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Other Employment

2012-2013	ABBYY (http://www.abbyy.com/ ; Moscow, Russia), computational linguist
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Service

Reviewer

Language
 Natural Language and Linguistic Theory
 Linguistic Inquiry
 Chicago Linguistic Society
 Linguistic Society of America
 West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics
 Israel Science Foundation
 German Research Foundation
 North East Linguistics Society
 Studies in Language
 Glossa: a journal of general linguistics
 Syntactic Theory and Research

Other

2023-2024	Austronesian Reading Group at MIT, coordinator
2016-2018	Morphology & Syntax Workshop at UChicago, coordinator
2015	LSA Summer Institute, intern
2014-2015	Chicago Linguistic Society, officer

Language Proficiency

Russian (native speaker), English (native speaker), Polish (intermediate), Georgian (intermediate), French (beginner)

Fieldwork Languages

West Circassian (Adyghe), East Circassian (Kabardian), Abkhaz, Xuduc and Qunqi Dargwa, Lezgian, Evenki, Samoan, Indonesian

Linguistic Acquaintance

Georgian, Arabic