

Speaker: **Maria Polinsky**
Harvard University

Title: **Complementation without Complement Clauses**

Date: Monday, January 28, 2008

Time: 4:00pm

Place: Rosenfeld Hall (corner of Temple & Grove)

Abstract:

Most languages distinguish relative clauses (RCs), embedded interrogative clauses (EIs), and embedded declarative clauses (EDs, aka complement clauses) both at the syntactic and semantic level. These structures differ in the presence of a nominal shell, A'-movement, island effects, and in their denotations. In this talk, I present and analyze new data from Circassian, a Northwest Caucasian language spoken in the south of Russia and Turkey, which does not follow this cross-linguistic pattern. In Adyghe, the same syntactic construction is used to express what in other languages would require a complex DP, a (yes/no or wh-) EI, or an ED. Thus the syntax/semantics mapping in Adyghe appears quite different from the cross-linguistically attested pattern.

I show that (i) Adyghe does not have EIs or EDs at all, but uniformly uses RCs instead; (ii) while the syntax of the embedded structure is constant (always an RC), the three different meanings can nevertheless be derived by means of analytical components that are independently needed in the grammar.