



## Faculty

Adam Albright  
Interim Section Head  
(fall 2018)

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Athulya Aravind  
starting fall 2019

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Luka Crnic

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Michel DeGraff

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Kai von Fintel  
Section Head (on  
leave fall 2018)

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Edward Flemming

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Suzanne Flynn

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Danny Fox

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Martin Hackl

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Irene Heim

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Sabine Iatridou  
Graduate Program  
Director

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Michael Kenstowicz

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Shigeru Miyagawa


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Wayne O'Neil

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### David Pesetsky

Ferrari P. Ward Professor of Modern  
Languages and Linguistics, and  
Margaret MacVicar Faculty Fellow

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### Mailing Address

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Cambridge, MA 02139, USA

### Research Interests

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Syntax (and interfaces with morphology and semantics); Syntax of Music

### Selected Publications

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(under construction: August 4, 2016)

- Slides from plenary talk, [Linguistic Society of America](#), January 4, 2013: "Что дѣлать?"

David Pesetsky

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Norvin Richards

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Roger Schwarzschild

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Donca Steriade

Undergraduate Officer

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## Professors

## Emeriti

Noam Chomsky

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James Harris

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Jay Keyser

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Kenneth Wexler

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## In memoriam

Ken Hale

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Morris Halle

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What is to be done?"

- [Phrasal Movement and its Discontents: Diseases and Diagnostics](#) (January 2012), in Lisa Cheng & Norbert Corver (eds.), *Diagnostics in Syntax*, Oxford University Press
- [Russian case morphology and the syntactic categories](#) (October 2010)
- [The Identity Thesis for Language and Music](#) (October 2009, with [Jonah Katz](#)) [clickable sound included in the PDF; sound files also available [here](#)]
- [Against Taking Diversity at "Face Value"](#) Invited commentary (May 2009) on "[The Myth of Language Universals](#)" by Evans & Levinson,
- a target article to appear in [Behavioral and Brain Sciences](#).
- [pedagogical chapter on Case theory](#) (with Esther Torrego) Draft of a chapter for the *Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, February 2009
- [Pirahã Exceptionality: a Reassessment](#) (with Andrew Nevins and Cilene Rodrigues) *Language* 85.2, 355-404 (June 2009) [An earlier draft is available [here](#).] (Responds to [this paper](#), among others.)
- [Evidence and Argumentation: a Reply to Everett \(2009\)](#) (with Andrew Nevins and Cilene Rodrigues) *Language* 85.3, 671-681 (September 2009) (A reply to [this response](#) to the paper listed above.)
- [Property Delay: Remarks on "Phase Extension" by Marcel den Dikken](#) Solicited "peer commentary", *Theoretical Linguistics.*, 33.1, pp. 105-120. (2007) Read the paper this is commenting on [here](#).
- [Probes, Goals and Syntactic Categories](#) (with Esther Torrego, UMass/Boston; June 2006). In *Proceedings of the Seventh Tokyo Conference on Psycholinguistics* (Y. Otsu, ed; 2006)
- [The Syntax of Valuation and the Interpretability of Features](#). (with Esther Torrego, UMass/Boston; October 2004). In *Phrasal and Clausal Architecture: Syntactic Derivation and Interpretation*. Amsterdam: Benjamins. (S. Karimi, V. Samiian and W.Wilkins, eds; 2007)

### Manuscript versions of recently published work

- [Cyclic Linearization of Syntactic Structure](#) (with Danny Fox, MIT; May 2004) [*Theoretical Linguistics* 31.1-2, 1-46. special issue on Object Shift in Scandinavian; Katalin É. Kiss, ed.]
- Responses to Fox & Pesetsky (2004) from *Theoretical Linguistics* 31.1-2:

by [Elena Anagnostopoulou](#); [Jonathan Bobaljik](#); [Molly Diesing](#); [Anders Holmberg](#); [Gereon Mueller](#); [Øystein Nilsen](#); [Peter Sells](#); [Balázs Surányi](#); [Peter Svenonius](#); and [Edwin Williams](#). [links are to those drafts available on the web].

- [Reply to the responses](#) by Fox and Pesetsky. [Theoretical Linguistics 31.1-2, 235-262. special issue on Object Shift in Scandinavian; Katalin É. Kiss, ed.]
- Note: The Theoretical Linguistics paper contains about 1/3 of the material that will form part of a monograph, in prep. For some of the remaining material, the best current source is the following lengthy handout:  
["Cyclic Linearization and the Typology of Movement"](#) (with Danny Fox, MIT)

#### **Related work:**

- ["Cyclic Linearization and Asymmetry in Scrambling"](#) by Heejeong Ko
- ["Pseudo-gapping and Cyclic Linearization"](#) by Shoichi Takahashi
- ["Tense, case, and the nature of syntactic categories"](#) (with Esther Torrego, UMass/Boston; 2002)  
[Final version in [The Syntax of Time](#), J. Guéron and J. Lecarme (eds.), MIT Press 2004]
- ["T-to-C Movement: Causes and Consequences \(with Esther Torrego, UMass/Boston\)"](#)  
[Final version in Michael Kenstowicz (ed.), [Ken Hale: A Life on Language](#). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (2001)]
- ["The Maturation of Grammatical Principles: Evidence from Russian Unaccusatives"](#) (with Maria Babyonyshev, Ronald Fein, Jennifer Ganger and Kenneth Wexler)  
[Significantly revised version appeared in [Linguistic Inquiry](#) 32.1 (2001)]
- [Phrasal Movement and Its Kin](#)  
[Final version appeared as an [MIT Press Monograph](#) (2000)]
- ["Principles of Sentence Pronunciation"](#)  
[Final version appeared In P. Barbosa, D. Fox, P. Hagstrom, M. McGinnis and D. Pesetsky (eds.)  
[Is the Best Good Enough?](#), MIT Press (1998)]

#### **Encyclopedia articles**

- ["Linguistic Universals and Universal Grammar"](#), MIT Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science. (2000)
- ["Principles & Parameters Theory"](#) Oxford International Encyclopedia of Linguistics, 2nd edition. Ed. W. Frawley. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2003)

## Older Unpublished work

- These PDF files are made from older manuscripts, and were not prepared for publication. They contain formatting and other errors.
- "[Russian Morphology and Lexical Theory](#)" (1977)  
[Generals paper in phonology from my graduate student days. Of interest as the birthplace of (what later became known as) Lexical Phonology.]
- "[The Earliness Principle](#)" (1989)  
[Paper presented at GLOW in 1989, but never written up.  
Interesting data and observations about counterfactual inversion and about short verb movement in English.]
- "[Zero Syntax: vol. 2: Infinitives](#)" (1991)  
[Material intended for Zero Syntax but not included in the final publication.]

## Education-related

- "[How Psychological Science Informs the Teaching of Reading](#)",  
by Keith Rayner, Barbara R. Foorman, Charles A. Perfetti, David Pesetsky, and Mark S. Seidenberg.  
Psychological Science in the Public Interest 2:2 (November 2001)
- "[How Reading Should be Taught](#)"  
by Keith Rayner, Barbara R. Foorman, Charles A. Perfetti, David Pesetsky, and Mark S. Seidenberg. Scientific American, March 2002.
- "[The Battle for Language: from Syntax to Phonics](#)"  
[a handout for a talk in a USC series on Language and Mind. (2000)]
- "[If Language Is Instinctual, How Should We Write and Teach?](#)"  
[a talk delivered to a 1997 seminar organized by the American Society of Newspaper Editors]
- "[Linguistics and Learning to Read](#)"  
[ an essay prepared for a 1996 workshop of the National Council of Teachers of English]

## Talks

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- new! [Dependent Case as Binding Theory](#) (2011)  
[handout from invited talk at NELS 42]
- [The Recursive Syntax and Prosody of Tonal Music](#) (2009; with Jonah Katz)  
(handout for an earlier version of the paper [The Identity Thesis for Language and Music](#) listed above)

from a talk at the conference [Recursion: Structural Complexity in Language and Cognition](#);

includes clickable sound (OS X users: Adobe Acrobat only, sound does not work in Preview)

- [Music Syntax is Language Syntax](#) (2007) [Updated version of a handout from a talk first delivered at the conference [Language and Music as Cognitive Systems](#)]

## Books

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- [Russian Case Morphology and the Syntactic Categories](#). MIT Press, 2013.
- [Phrasal Movement and its Kin](#). MIT Press, 2000.
- [Is the Best Good Enough?](#) MIT Press, 1998.
- [Zero Syntax](#), MIT Press, 1994.

## Publications

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- Pesetsky, David. To appear. [Complementizer-trace effects](#). to appear in Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.) *A Companion to Syntax*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell..
- Legate, Julie; Pesetsky, David; Yang, Charles. 2013. [Recursive Misrepresentations: a reply to Levinson \(2013\)](#). *Language* 90.2, 515-528. (DOI: 10.1353/lan.2014.0034).
- Pesetsky, David. 2013. [Phrasal Movement and its Discontents: Diseases and Diagnostics](#). in Lisa L.L. Cheng and Norbert Corver (eds.) *Diagnostics for Movement*, Oxford University Press. (2013) , pp. 123-157..
- Pesetsky, David. 2013. [Russian Case Morphology and the Syntactic Categories](#). MIT Press.
- Katz, Jonah; Pesetsky, David. 2011. [The Identity Thesis for Language and Music](#). submitted.
- Pesetsky, David; Torrego, Esther. 2011. [Case](#). in C. Boeckx, ed. *Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 52-72.
- Pesetsky, David. 2009. [Against taking linguistic diversity at "face value"](#). invited commentary on paper by Evans and Levinson. *Brain and Behavioral Sciences* 32.5, 464-5..
- Nevins, Andrew; Pesetsky, David; Rodrigues, Cilene. 2009. [Evidence and Argumentation: a reply to Everett \(2009\)](#). *Language* 85.3, 671-681.
- Nevins, Andrew; Pesetsky, David; Rodrigues, Cilene. 2009. [Piraha Exceptionality: a Reassessment](#). *Language* 85.2, 355-404.

- Pesetsky, David. 2008. [Passive, Deponency and Tense: Comments on the Paper by Papangeli and Lavidas](#). in S. Iatridou, ed. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics: Proceedings of the Workshop on Greek Syntax.
- Pesetsky, David. 2007. [Property Delay](#). Theoretical Linguistics, 33.1, pp. 105-120.
- Pesetsky, David; Torrego, Esther. 2007. [The Syntax of Valuation and the Interpretability of Features](#). in S. Karimi, V. Samiian and W. Wilkins, eds. Phrasal and Clausal Architecture. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Pesetsky, David; Torrego, Esther. 2006. [Probes, Goals and Syntactic Categories](#). in Yukio Otsu, ed. Proceedings of the 7th annual Tokyo Conference on Psycholinguistics. Tokyo: Hituzi Syobo Publishing Company.
- Fox, Danny; Pesetsky, David. 2005. [Cyclic Linearization and its interaction with other aspects of grammar: a reply](#). Theoretical Linguistics 31.1-2 (Special Issue on Object Shift). pp. 235-262 [reply to commentaries on Fox & Pesetsky 2005].
- Fox, Danny; Pesetsky, David. 2005. [Cyclic Linearization of Syntactic Structure](#). Theoretical Linguistics 31.1-45.
- Pesetsky, David; Torrego, Esther. 2004. [Tense, Case and the Nature of Syntactic Categories . .](#)
- Ratner, Keith; Foorman, Barbara R.; Perfetti, Charles A.; Pesetsky, David; Seidenberg, Mark S. 2002. [How should reading be taught?](#). Scientific American (March 1 2002).
- Rayner, Keith; Foorman, Barbara R.; Perfetti, Charles A.; Pesetsky, David; Seidenberg, Mark S. 2002. [How Psychological Science Informs the Teaching of Reading](#). Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 2:2.
- Pesetsky, David; Torrego, Esther. 2001. [T-to-C Movement: Causes and Consequences](#). M. Kenstowicz (ed.) Ken Hale: A Life in Language. Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 355-426.



Contact

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Links for department  
members

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