

Dr. Angelika Kratzer
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Monday, October 4th
3:00 - 4:30 pm in GFS 101
Reception to follow in GFS 330

“Distinguishing contrastive, given, and new information”

The question of how linguistic theory should break down the dimension of “information structure” that includes contrastiveness, newness and givenness continues to be a subject of debate. This talk reports on joint work with Lisa Selkirk and will defend the three-way distinction between given, new, and focus of contrast originally proposed in Chafe 1976. We argue that the status of a constituent as new is unmarked in the grammar, while constituents which are given or are a focus of contrast are marked as such in the syntactic representation which mediates between sound and meaning.