Thomas de Haven Roberts

Updated: August 1, 2025

Office	Trans 10	**Email**	`t.d.h.roberts@uu.nl`
	Kamer 2.10	**Citizenship**	United States
	3512 JK Utrecht	**Residence**	Netherlands

Research Interests

Broad: Formal semantics, pragmatics, syntax-semantics interface, semantics-pragmatics interface, computational methods

Narrow: Attitudes, clausal embedding, questions, context update, lexical semantics, discourse particles, Estonian, internet linguistics

Employment

2023-	**Assistant Professor** (*Universitair docent*) of Computational Linguistics, Utrecht University Linguistics section, Department of Languages, Literature, and Communication
2021-2023	**Postdoctoral Researcher**, University of Amsterdam Institute for Logic, Language and Computation

Education

2021	**Ph.D., Linguistics**, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA Dissertation: *How to make believe: Inquisitivity, veridicality, and evidentiality in belief reports* Committee: Pranav Anand (chair), Donka Farkas, Jim McCloskey, Floris Roelofsen
2017	**M.A., Linguistics**, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA
2014	**S.B., Linguistics and Philosophy**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Publications

* = equal contribution, authors listed alphabetically

Journal Publications

2022   Nguyen, A., **T. Roberts**, P. Anand, & J. Fox Tree. Look, Dude: How Hyperpartisan and Nonpartisan Writing Differ in Online Communities. *Discourse & Society* 33(3): 371-390.

MANUSCRIPTS

Under revision   **Roberts, T.*** & K. Sasaki*. What embeds exclamatives and why. Under revision for *Semantics & Pragmatics*.

Under revision   Roberts, T. How to build a question-embedder: The case of *can't believe*. Invited submission for Wataru Uegaki & Floris Roelofsen (eds.), *The interface between logic and grammar in the domain of clausal complementation* (Special issue of *Glossa*; invited submission).

Under revision   Roberts, T. Inquisitive responsive predicates and the logic of contemplation. Under revision for *Journal of Semantics*.

In preparation   Kroll, M.* & **T. Roberts***. Bare adverbial responses and the typology of polarity ellipsis.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

2023   Roberts, T. Uninquisitive questions. In *Proceedings of the 4th Workshop on Inquisitiveness Below and Beyond the Sentence Boundary*, 21-30.

2022   Hoeks, M.*, J. Pesetsky*, D. Özyıldız*, & **T. Roberts***. Event plurality and quantifier scope across clause boundaries. In J.R. Starr, J. Kim, & B. Öney (eds.), *Proceedings of Semantics & Linguistic Theory (SALT) 32*, 443-462.

2021   Roberts, T. Argument saturation and nominal complements. In A. Farinella & A. Hill (eds.), *Proceedings of North East Linguistics Society (NELS) 51* vol. 2, 167-180.

2019   Roberts, T. I can't believe it's not lexical: Deriving distributed veridicality. In K. Blake, F. Davis, K. Lamp, & J. Rhyne (eds.), *Proceedings of Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 29*, 665-685.

2019   M. Kroll* & **T. Roberts***. Stating the obvious: *Of course* as a focus-sensitive marker of uncontroversiality. In M.T. Espinal, E. Castroviejo, M. Leonetti, L. McNally, C. Real-Puigdollers (eds.), *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 23*, 37-53.

2018   Roberts, T. Responsive predicates are question-embedding: Evidence from Estonian. In S. Solt & U. Sauerland (eds.), *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 22*, 271-288.

2015   Altshuler, D., V. Hacquard, **T. Roberts**, & A. S. White. On double access, cessation and parentheticality. In S. D'Antonio, C. Little, M. Moroney, & M. Wiegand (eds.), *Proceedings of SALT 25*, 18-37. Ithaca, NY: CLC Publications.

2013   Chang, A., D. Nunez, **T. Roberts**, D. Sengeh, & C. Breazeal. Pre-pilot findings on developing a literacy tablet. In *Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on Interaction Design and Children*, 471-474. New York, NY: ACM.

2012   Chang, A., C. Breazeal, F. Faridi, **T. Roberts**, G. Davenport, H. Lieberman, & N. Montfort. Textual tinkerability: encouraging storytelling behaviors to foster emergent literacy. In *CHI '12 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 505-520. New York, NY: ACM.

IN WORKING PAPER VOLUMES

| 2020 | Roberts, T. The root of it all: Affectedness across lexical categories. In A. Hedding & M. Hoeks (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics at Santa Cruz 4*, 77-96. |

Presentations

* = equal contribution, authors listed alphabetically

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2025	**Roberts, T*** & Özyıldız, D.* A causal explanation for the contrafactive gap. Workshop *How we do (not) talk about mistaken beliefs*, Heinrich-Heine University Düsseldorf, February 6-7.
2021	Roberts, T. Parenthetically-embedded questions. MECORE workshop on approaches to the semantics of clause-embedding predicates: theories, cross-linguistic data, and experimentation, University of Edinburgh, October 22-24. [*virtual*]
2020	**Roberts, T*** and K. Sasaki*. What embeds exclamatives and why. Words with Friends, Stanford University, November 13. [*virtual*]
2019	Kroll, M.* & **T. Roberts***. Polarity ellipsis derives bare adverbial responses, and stripping, too. UCSC-Stanford Negation, Polarity, & Ellipsis Workshop, November 2.
2018	Roberts, T. I can't believe what's not butter: Deriving distributed factivity. Syntax & Semantics Circle, UC Berkeley, November 5.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (PEER-REVIEWED ABSTRACTS)

2024*	Sbardolini, G. & **T. Roberts**. Getting not even. Talk at the 4th Tsinghua Interdisciplinary Workshop on Logic, Language, and Meaning, Beijing, China, March 29-31.
2023	Nguyen, A., **T. Roberts**, P. Anand, & J. Fox Tree. Writing style affects partisanship and persuasiveness ratings. 5th Symposium on Multidisciplinary International Symposium on Disinformation in Open Online Media, November 21-22, Centrum Wiskunde en Informatica, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
2023	Özyıldız, D. * & **T. Roberts.***. Bad attitudes: Impossible presuppositions and the false belief gap. 14th Tbilisi International Symposium on Logic, Language and Computation (TbiLLC), September 18-22, Telavi, Georgia.
2023	**Roberts, T.*** & D. Özyıldız*. Bad attitudes: Impossible presuppositions and the false belief gap. Sinn und Bedeutung (SuB) 28, September 5-8, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany.
2023	**Roberts, T.*** & D. Rudin*. Polarity reversal questions and the semantics of prosodic integration. Sinn und Bedeutung (SuB) 28, September 5-8, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany.
2023	Roberts, T. Uninquisitive questions. Inquisitiveness Below and Beyond the Sentence Boundary (InqBnB) 4, University of Lorraine, France.
2023	Roberts, T. There isn't a form-meaning mismatch in double negation slifting, I don't think. North East Linguistics Society (NELS) 53, January 12-14, University of Göttingen, Germany.

2022	Hoeks, M.*, J. Pesetsky*, D. Özyıldız*, & **T. Roberts***. Event plurality and quantifier scope across clause boundaries. Semantics & Linguistic Theory (SALT) 32, June 8-10, El Colegio de Mexico & Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
2022	Hoeks, M.*, J. Pesetsky*, D. Özyıldız*, & **T. Roberts***. Event plurality and quantifier scope across clause boundaries. Generative Linguistics in the Old World (GLOW) 45, April 26-29, Queen Mary University of London, UK. [*poster*]
2021	**Roberts, T.*** & K. Sasaki*. Which predicates embed exclamatives and why. Linguistics Society of America Annual Meeting, January 7-10. [*virtual*]
2021	Roberts, T. Argument saturation and intransitive modification: The double life of embedded clauses. Linguistics Society of America Annual Meeting, January 7-10. [*poster; virtual*]
2020	Roberts, T. Argument saturation and the syntactic status of embedded clauses. Brussels Conference on Generative Linguistics 13, December 17-18, KU Leuven. [*virtual*]
2020	Roberts, T. Argument saturation and intransitive modification: The double life of embedded clauses. North East Linguistics Society (NELS) 51, November 6-8, Université du Québec à Montréal. [*virtual*]
2019	Roberts, T. I can't believe it's not lexical: Deriving distributed factivity. Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 29, May 15-17, UCLA.
2019	Bellik, J. & **T. Roberts**. Verbatim memory for surface features: Evidence from stress shift. CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing, March 29-31, University of Colorado, Boulder.
2019	Kroll, M.* & **T. Roberts***. Are bare adverbial responses derived by ellipsis? Definitely. Linguistics Society of America (LSA), January 3-6, New York, New York.
2018	Kroll, M.* & **T. Roberts***. Stating the obvious: *Of course* as a focus-sensitive marker of uncontroversiality. Sinn und Bedeutung (SuB) 23, September 5-7, University Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.
2018	Roberts, T. Pragmatic Licensing of Polar Questions in Estonian. Chicago Linguistics Society (CLS) 54, April 26-28.
2018	Roberts, T. The syntax of statives across categories. Linguistics Society of America (LSA), January 4-8, Salt Lake City, Utah.
2017	Roberts, T. Relating form and meaning in negative polar questions. Inquisitivity Below and Beyond the Sentence Boundary (InqBnB) 2, December 18-19, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
2017	Roberts, T. The selectional restrictions of responsive predicates in Estonian. Sinn und Bedeutung (SuB) 22, September 7-10, University of Potsdam/ZAS, Germany.
2017	Roberts, T. Responsive Predicates are Question-Embedding: Evidence from Estonian. Chicago Linguistics Society (CLS) 53, May 25-27.
2015	Altshuler, D., V. Hacquard, **T. Roberts**, & A. S. White (2015). On double access, cessation and parentheticality. Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) 25, Stanford University, California.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

2018	Bellik, J. & **T. Roberts**. Verbatim memory for surface features: Evidence from stress shift. California Annual Meeting on Psycholinguistics (CAMP) 2, University of Southern California, December 1-2.
2018	Kroll, M.* & **T. Roberts***. I hold these truths to be self-evident: The semantic and pragmatic contributions of *of course*. California Universities Semantics and Pragmatics (CUSP) 11, UC Berkeley, October 28.
2018	Roberts, T. Bias in Estonian negative polar questions. Linguistics at Santa Cruz (LASC), UC Santa Cruz, March 10. [*poster*]
2017	Roberts, T. The semantics of responsive predicates and their complements in Estonian. Linguistics at Santa Cruz (LASC), UC Santa Cruz, March 18.
2015	Roberts, T. Thinking about thinking in Estonian. California Universities Semantics and Pragmatics Workshop (CUSP) 8, Stanford University.

Teaching Experience

INSTRUCTOR, UTRECHT UNIVERSITY:

BA Linguistics	**Meaning and Language** (2025)
	Phonology and Fieldwork (2025)
	Language and Computation (2024)
BA AI	**Computational Linguistics** (2024, 2025)
	Formal and Natural Languages (2024, 2025)
	Machine Learning 1 [intro to ML before 2025] (2024, 2025)
MSc AI	**Natural Language Processing** (2024, 2025)

INSTRUCTOR, UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM:

2023	**Human Cognition** (Spring, BA Cognition, Language, & Communication)
2022	**Semantics & Pragmatics** (Spring, BA Linguistics)
2021	**Logic and Conversation** (Fall, MSc Logic)

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR, UCSC, BA LINGUISTICS:

2021	**Language OnLine (LOL)** (Summer; online)
	Structure of Uralic Languages (Spring; online)
2019	**Semantics 1** (Fall)

TEACHING ASSISTANT, UCSC, BA LINGUISTICS:

2020	**Semantics 1** (Fall; online)
	Instructor: Jake Vincent
	Syntax 2 (Spring; online)
	Instructor: Ivy Sichel
	Semantics 2 (Winter)
	Instructor: Jess H.-K. Law
2019	**Invented Languages** (Spring; online)
	Instructor: Pranav Anand
	Semantics 2 (Winter)
	Instructor: Donka Farkas
2018	**Introduction to Linguistics** (Spring)
	Instructor: Pranav Anand
	Syntax 1 (Winter)
	Instructor: Jim McCloskey
2017	**Pragmatics** (Fall)
	Instructor: Adrian Brasoveanu
	Language, Society, and Culture (Spring)
	Instructor: Jim McCloskey
	Semantics 1 (Winter)
	Instructor: Donka Farkas
2016	**Introduction to Linguistics** (Fall)
	Instructor: Adrian Brasoveanu

Advising

MASTER'S THESIS, ADVISOR:

2024	Fiona Spencer (Logic, UvA, with Maria Aloni)
	Wondering about Mood in Romance: The view from Italian inquisitive predicates
2023	Nathan Malik (Logic, UvA, with Maria Aloni)
	Morphology and Compositional Interpretation

MASTER'S THESIS, COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Ongoing	Milo Treanor (AI, UU)
2025	Aleksej Cornelissen (AI, UU)
	Yvette van Dinten (AI, UU)
2023	Siyuan Cao (Logic, UvA)
	Marleen Gaasbeek (Logic, UvA)
2022	Tomasz Klochowicz (Logic, UvA)
	Flavia Nährlich (Logic, UvA)

BACHELOR'S THESIS, ADVISOR:

2025	Jens Louman (AI, UU)
	Emoties herkennen in conversaties in het Nederlands met behulp van Probabilistic Soft Logic [Recognizing emotions in conversations in Dutch using *Probabilistic Soft Logic*]
2024	An Ming Hauptmeijer (AI, UU)
	A Study on Gender Bias in Dutch Large Language Models
	Austė Jociūtė (Linguistics, UU)
	The Social Perception of Loanwords Versus Their Lithuanian Equivalent
	Mido Thijsen (AI, UU)
	Performance of Dutch ASR: Standard Dutch vs. Limburgish
2022	Hamin Lee (Linguistics, UvA, with Milica Denić)
	Semantics and pragmatics of Dutch response particles jawel *and* ja...wel

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS:

2018-2019	Honig Undergraduate Research Assistant Program, UCSC
	Mentees: Madeleine King & Koy Rugama
	Project: Memory for prosodic features
	Co-supervised with Jennifer Bellik

Awards and fellowships

2020	Dissertation Quarter Fellowship, UCSC
2019	Summer Dissertation Fellowship, The Humanities Institute, UCSC
2015-2016	Regents Fellowship, UCSC
2014-2015	Baggett Fellowship, University of Maryland
2014	1st place, S. Klein Prize for Technical Writing, MIT
2010-2014	James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship

Service

JOURNAL REVIEWING

Glossa
Journal of Slavic Linguistics
Journal of Semantics
Linguistics & Philosophy (x2)
Philosophical Quarterly
Snippets

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT REVIEWING

Amsterdam Colloquium (x2)
California Annual Meeting on Psycholinguistics
European Summer School on Language, Logic, and Information (x3)
MECORE final workshop
Semantics and Linguistic Theory (x2)
West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (x2)

GRANT REVIEWING

2022   National Science Centre of Poland: OPUS Grants

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING

2022   Amsterdam Colloquium, Organizing Committee and Proceedings Editor

SERVICE TO THE FIELD

2015-   Organizing & Program Committees, North American Computational Linguistics Open Competition (NACLO)
2014-2015   NACLO site host, University of Maryland

SERVICE TO THE DEPARTMENT

2022-2023   Organizer, Meaning, Logic & Cognition seminar series, ILLC
2019   Coordinator, Graduate Student open house, UCSC
2018-2019   Coordinator, Semantics, Pragmatics, and Language Philosophy (SPLAP) reading group
2017-2018   Events Committee Chair, UCSC Linguistics
2016-2017   Computer Czar & Editor of the WHASC newsletter, UCSC Linguistics

Computer skills

Languages   Python, R, PHP, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Bash
Programs   Praat, Audacity, IbexFarm, OpenSesame

Languages

Native   English
Fluent   Dutch
Advanced   French
Intermediate Estonian, Japanese