Abstract: What can eyes do for you? What does it mean to be able to see and to be seen by other individuals? My work investigates how human beings use their eyes and their body during naturally occurring face-to-face interactions and outlines the orderliness of their behavior.

Contrary to previous claims that suggest that gaze is mainly organized at the level of turns at talk, regulating turn-taking and it mainly displays participants’ engagement and disengagement with the conversation (e.g. Kendon 1967, Duncan 1972, Goodwin 1981), I suggest that gaze in interaction is rather organized in relation to sequences of talk and the development of courses of action and will provide extensive evidence for it. Beside detailed investigations of gaze behavior during dyadic interactions in Italian, I will also present data on gaze behavior during question-answer sequences in a cross-cultural comparison of dyadic interactions in Italian, Yélî Dnye (a language isolate spoken on Rossel Island, a remote island off Papua New Guinea), and Tenejapan Tzeltal (a Mayan language spoken in an indigenous community in the highlands of southern Mexico).

The ultimate aim is to outline a method for investigating gaze and visible behavior during social interaction in different cultures and different species.