

Syntax II: Issues in Syntax

Spring Semester 2013

ENGL 627S / LING 522
T-TH 1:30-2:45pm, Heav 110

Instructor

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Office hours: Tues-Thurs 9:45-10:15am and 3:00-4:00pm, or by appointment

Description

An in-depth investigation of syntactic phenomena and the competing theoretical analyses proposed to account for them. Emphasis is on evaluation of the descriptive and explanatory adequacy of syntactic analyses proposed by various authors. Students will also have the opportunity to construct their own analyses.

Topics to be covered:

1. Foundations of Syntax

- Minimalism and its development from earlier generative theories
- Comparison of Minimalism with other contemporary theories, including parallel-architecture and construction grammar
- Different approaches to syntax-semantics mismatch
- Different approaches to typology and universals

2. Lexical categories: the building blocks of syntax

- Categories and syntactic features
- Within-category variation and mixed categories
- Universals and typology of category systems
- Generative, functionalist, and multi-dimensional theories

3. Relative clauses

- Structure of relative clauses
- Universals and typology of relative clauses
- Filler-gap dependencies and island constraints
- Resumptive pronouns
- Movement, co-indexing, and syntax-semantics linking approaches

4. Configurationality and scrambling

- Configurationality and free word order phenomena
- Scrambling (movement) vs. non-movement analysis of free word order
- Scrambling and binding
- Semantic and discourse factors in scrambling

Requirements

This class will be conducted largely like a seminar. There will be a selection of articles to read for each of the three major topics. I will do some lecturing to introduce each topic, and you will each be assigned two articles to present to the rest of the class some time during the semester. Most of the discussion will be determined by your own interests and questions. Evaluation will be as follows:

Class Participation

10% (100 points)

- **You are expected to attend every class, complete the assigned reading and homework *before* class, and participate fully in class activities and discussions.** Each unexcused absence will result in a 20-point deduction from your class participation grade. If you must be absent from a class for any reason (excused or unexcused), you are still responsible for the content of the class.
- If you must be absent for an extended period due to an illness or other unavoidable circumstances, this will not count against your grade. However, please notify me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for making up the work.

Written assignments (3)

30% (100 points each)

- You will be assigned three problem sets to write up and hand in.

Presentation of article (2)

20% (100 points each)

- On two occasions during the semester you will present an article to the class *in a critical way* and lead the discussion of the article. You should prepare a brief handout summarizing the points you plan to discuss.

Term paper/Presentation or Take-home exam (1)

40% (400 points)

For the end-of-semester assessment, you have a choice of **either a take-home exam or a term paper/presentation (choose one)**. Please let me know which option you plan to take before Spring Break.

Option 1 Term paper/ short presentation

- The **term paper** will consist of a 10-15 page paper (2500-3500 words) on a syntactic topic of your choice. You may write either a **critical essay**, comparing and evaluating two or more authors' perspectives on a particular problem, or a **research paper**, presenting an original analysis of a new or existing data set in a language that you know. The term paper will be due at 5pm on **Tues, April 30**. I will need a one-page topic proposal from you by **Tues, March 26**. Details of the term paper option will be given on a separate document.
- During the last week of classes, you will give a short **presentation of the term paper** (15 minute presentation + 10 minutes for discussion). The presentation does not need to include everything in the term paper. You can focus on just one or two key arguments. You should prepare a short handout.

Option 2 Take-home Exam

- The **take-home exam** will consist of three essay questions related to the topics covered in class. Each question will require both data analysis (data will be provided) and discussion of theoretical issues. You will pick up the exam on Tues April 23, and hand it in on or before 5pm on **Tues, April 30**. You may use any resources available to you (readings, notes, etc.), except for the help of your classmates or other people.

Homework

0% (just for practice / discussion)

- In addition to the requirements listed above, you will occasionally be assigned exercises or study questions to prepare for class discussion.

General Policies

Grading

- A+ = 970 and above; A = 930-969; A- = 900-929; B+ = 870-899; B = 830-869; B- = 800-829; C + = 770-799; C = 730-769; C- = 700-729; D+ = 670-699; D = 630-669; D- = 600-629; F = below 600

Assignments

- Assignments should be completed *before* the beginning of the class in which they are due. All assignments should be either typed using a word processing program or *neatly* handwritten. Please staple or clip the pages together. If you use a

computer to prepare your assignments, be sure to make regular backups of your work. Email submissions are NOT accepted.

- **Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangement.** If you must be absent on the day that an assignment is due, you are still responsible for submitting it on time (or early).
- Although the above policies are firm, special arrangements can be made in cases of illness or emergency. If an emergency situation occurs, please notify me as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

Plagiarism and Cheating

- You are encouraged to work together with your classmates on the written assignments (with the exception of the take-home exam). However, you should *write up* each assignment on your own. **Please include on your assignment the names of anyone it has been discussed with.**
- Copying answers from classmates, allowing others to copy your answers, copying from a book or article without proper citation, and all other forms of plagiarism and cheating as given in the University's guidelines will result in a zero grade for the relevant tests or assignments and may be reported to the Dean of Students' office for disciplinary action.
- To avoid any possibility of cheating, DO NOT give any other student a copy of your assignment in either written or electronic form.
- The University's guidelines on plagiarism and cheating are listed in the brochure "Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students," which is available online at: <http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/administration/integrity.htm>

Classroom atmosphere

- Feel free to share you ideas and opinions about the course material, and don't be shy about asking questions. This is a small class, and its success depends on your active participation! (Remember, too, that participation is part of your grade...)
- Please help maintain an atmosphere that is both friendly and professional.

Getting Help

- If you have any questions about the course material or are having any kind of problems in the course, feel free to come discuss it with me. If you cannot make it to office hours, you can set up an appointment at a different time.

- If you need any kind of special accommodation for a disability, medical condition, or other situation, please go to the Dean of Students Office (494-1747) to develop an official arrangement for accommodations in all of your classes.

Readings (all except textbook available as pdf files in Blackboard Learn or on reserve)

Textbook

Carnie, Andrew. 2013. *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*, 3rd edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

- This book is available at Follett's and University Bookstore. You have covered most of this material already in Syntax I, but we will be reading certain chapters as background/review before reading the research articles on each topic.

Readings on Foundations of Syntax

Culicover, Peter W. and Ray S. Jackendoff. 2006. The simpler syntax hypothesis. *TRENDS in Cognitive Science* 10(9): 413-418.

Culicover, Peter W. and Ray S. Jackendoff. 2005. *Simpler Syntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (chapters 2-3, pp. 44-106)

Goldberg, Adele E. 2003. Constructions: a new theoretical approach to language. *TRENDS in Cognitive Science* 7(5): 219-224.

Lasnik, Howard. 2002. The minimalist program in syntax. *TRENDS in Cognitive Science* 6(10): 432-437.

Jackendoff, Ray S. 1999. Parallel constraint-based generative theories of language. *TRENDS in Cognitive Science* 3(10): 393-400.

Moravcsik, Edith A. 2006. *An Introduction to Syntactic Theory*. London: Continuum. (ch. 6, pp. 179-218)

Van Valin Jr., Robert D. 2003. Minimalism and explanation. In J. Moore, & M. Polinsky (Eds.), *The Nature of Explanation in Linguistic Theory* (pp. 281-297). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Readings on Lexical Categories (preliminary)

Baker, Mark C. 2003. *Lexical Categories: Verbs, Nouns, and Adjectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (chapters 1, 2, 4.6, 5)

Chomsky, Noam. 1981. *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Dordrecht: Foris. (Ch. 2, Sec. 2.3, pp. 48-55)

Cristofaro, Sonia. 2009. Grammatical categories and relations: universality vs. language-specificity and construction-specificity. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 3(1): 441–479.

Croft, William. 2001. *Radical Construction Grammar: Syntactic Theory in Typological Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Ch. 2, pp. 63-131)

Francis, Elaine J. and Etsuyo Yuasa. 2008. A multi-modular approach to gradual change in grammaticalization. *Journal of Linguistics* 44(1): 45-86.

Malouf, Robert. 2000a. Verbal gerunds as mixed categories in HPSG. In Robert Borsley (ed.), *The Nature and Function of Syntactic Categories*. Academic Press, 133-166.

Nikolaeva, Irina. 2008. Between nouns and adjectives: A constructional view. *Lingua* 118: 969-996.

Radford, Andrew. 2004. *Minimalist Syntax: Exploring the Structure of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 2, pp. 33-65)

Spencer, Andrew. 2008. Negation in Japanese: A case of morphosyntactic mismatch. *Lingua* 118: 997-1017.

Additional bibliography to be provided as we go.

Syntax II: Spring 2013 Timetable

(This schedule is only preliminary and will be changed and updated throughout the semester.

WA= written assignment; PR=presentation)

	Dates	Topics	Readings	Presentations & Assignments
1	Jan 8-10	Foundations of syntax: Mainstream Generative Grammar	Carnie ch. 1; Culicover & Jackendoff 2005, ch. 2-3; Lasnik 2002; Moravcsik 2006, ch. 6, sections 1-2	
2	Jan 15-17	Foundations of syntax: Parallel-architecture theories and Construction Grammar	Jackendoff 1999; Culicover & Jackendoff 2006; Goldberg 2003; Moravcsik 2006, ch. 6, sections 4-5; Van Valin 2003	

3	Jan 22-24	Lexical categories in generative grammar and the problem of lexical categories	Carnie ch. 2; Radford 2004, ch. 2; Chomsky 1981, ch. 2, Sec. 2.3; Baker 2003, ch. 1	
4	Jan 29-31	Baker's alternative generative theory: exploring the essence of verb, noun, and adjective	Baker 2003, ch. 2 and ch. 4, section 4.6.3 only	
5	Feb 5-7	Functional-typological vs. generative theories: within-category and cross-linguistic variation	Croft 2001, ch. 2; Baker 2003, ch. 5; Cristofaro 2009	Feb 7: PR #1 (Cristofaro) PR #2 (Baker)
6	Feb 12-14	Multidimensional theories: category mismatch, mixed categories, and inheritance	Francis & Yuasa 2008; Malouf 2000a; Spencer 2008; Nikolaeva 2008	Feb 14: PR #3 (Spencer) PR#4 (Nikolaeva)
7	Feb 19-21	Relative clauses	Additional readings to be announced	Feb. 19: WA #1 due
8	Feb 26-28	Relative clauses		PR# 5-6
9	Mar 5-7	Relative clauses		PR #7-8
Mar 16-21: NO CLASSES, SPRING BREAK				
10	Mar 19-21	Scrambling		WA #2: due Mar 19
11	Mar 26-28	Scrambling		Term paper proposal due Mar. 26 PR #9-10
12	April 2-4	Scrambling		PR #11-12
13	April 9-11	Scrambling		PR #13-14
14	April 16-18	Foundations of syntax revisited		WA #3 due Apr. 16
15	April 23-25	Term paper presentations		Take-home exam distributed Apr 23
16	Apr 29-May3	No classes during exam week		Take-home exam or term paper due Tues Apr 30