DESCRIPTION

There has always been a tension in Linguistics between explaining the core, highly abstract properties of Language, common to all instantiations of particular languages, and accounting for the complexity of language-particular variation. Typological approaches generally focus on the latter, while formal approaches concentrate on the former.

In this seminar we will explore the syntactic structures used for the expression of Motion Predicates, with special emphasis on comparative work involving languages that use analytic complex substructures, such as Serial Verb Constructions and Complex Verbal Predicates. We will concentrate on reading the relevant literature and coming up with, and exploring, new theoretical formal approaches. Students will read weekly assignments with in-class discussion and will work on a theoretically oriented hands-on project involving data collection, processing and analyzing that will constitute the final project. If you are familiar with, or a speaker of, a non-mainstream language, you are encouraged to explore that language for this phenomenon.

Pre-requisites: Syntax I and Syntax II, or permission of instructor.

The main objectives of the course are:

• to develop in-depth mastering of techniques in syntactic analysis
• to gather a body of data and analyze it from a formal perspective, and
• to understand and be able to contribute, through the analysis of the dataset, to the major issues in the theoretical enterprise.

Other goals include the following:

• To learn to identify interesting and unusual problems in syntactic analysis.
• To acquire a good domain of the technical literature on unusual syntactic structures.
• To develop the linguistic tools and techniques relevant for the formal analysis of unusual syntactic structures.
• To (formally) represent those structures.

• To develop your analytical skills and intellectual abilities in general.
COURSE MATERIALS

We will be using readings in the form of journal papers or manuscripts available in the linguistic network, as well as handouts and presentations.

WORK and EVALUATION

Your work will be evaluated on the basis of the following requirements:

- **Data Set** (gathering and processing) 30%
- **Class participation** (readings and presentations) 30%
- **Final Presentation** 40%

- **Data Set**: You will be responsible for collecting data on a particular language, using a battery of tests that I will provide, designed to elicit data relevant to Motion Predicates. This will require a minimum of 2 speakers (3 will be better, if possible). The processing of these data will involve: digitizing and clipping the recordings; introducing them into ELAN and transcribing them; and, finally, coding them.

- **Class participation** is essential to the proper development of the course. This will involve not only regular participation in class discussions, but also being responsible on a rotational basis for the presentation and discussion of certain weekly readings. The discussion of the readings (whether you are a presenter or simply a discussant) will require you not only to have 'learned' some basic concepts (from the readings), but also to be functional and active with them (applying them to some new area/language). The readings and their discussion are designed to contribute to the understanding and formal analysis of the data set you have previously gathered and to the final presentation. This is supposed to be a collaborative and engaged process, so be ready to contribute to discussion-intensive class sessions.

- **The Final Presentation** will be individual, 15-20 min, and scheduled on the class periods before Finals Week. This presentation is supposed to be the culmination of your formal analysis of the Data Set you gathered at the beginning of the semester and to which our weekly readings and discussions have contributed. The idea is that you practice and improve your presentation skills at the professional level: the ability to concisely identify and present the main issues of a linguistic problem, the ability to formulate an initial hypothesis, the ability to identify and present the relevant tests/evidence to defend the hypothesis, and potential conclusions; the ability to prepare a sensible handout; the ability to prepare a power point presentation; the ability to manage your allotted time; the ability to address questions from the audience.

The presentation should be of a quality that makes it ready to be submitted as an abstract to a professional linguistic conference. Each student is encouraged to turn it into a written paper to be submitted as a publication.
Both collaborative and individual work is encouraged and required. You have to do both, but how much emphasis you put in either one will depend on class requirements and your personal taste.

Your letter grade will be determined as follows:

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<th>Score Range</th>
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<td>98-100</td>
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<td>90-97</td>
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GENERAL POLICIES

• If you have to miss a class or a deadline (e.g., for a project), talk to me in advance. We'll work it out, but **no late work will be accepted**.

• Remember it is **YOUR responsibility** to get the notes of any missed class (for any reason) and to find out about assignments.

• Students are encouraged to **discuss** their project problems with each other; however, each student must **write up** his or her own solution alone, including on it the names of anyone it has been discussed with.

• **Cell phones MUST be turned off in class; no cell phone use of ANY kind is allowed in class.**

• Laptop use in the classroom is only allowed when explicitly stated for a particular task in class... otherwise, keep it closed.

• If you have a disability, need special assistance or, in general, find yourself in a situation that I should know about, contact me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.

• In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are two ways to get information about changes in this course (in this order):
  - Blackboard Vista webpage, and
  - my email address (ebenedi@exchange.purdue.edu)