

Linguist9600B - Syntax
Syntax Seminar on Subjects

Instructor: Ileana Paul

Email: ileana@uwo.ca

Office: UC136b

Phone: x85360

Office hours: TBA (or by appointment)

The main goal of this course is to familiarize the students with current syntactic theory, by investigating the notion of grammatical subject and how it has been analyzed over the past 50 years. Students will be expected to read original literature in the Principles and Parameters/Minimalism frameworks and will learn about different approaches to syntax (e.g. Relational Grammar, Lexical-Functional Grammar). Students will also learn to apply what they have learned to new data from different languages.

By the end of the course students should

- feel confident reading formal syntactic literature
- be able to apply theoretical analyses to original data
- be able to critique and present research papers
- feel confident about doing original research within the frameworks provided
- be able to communicate their research results (in the form of abstracts, squibs, and oral presentations)

Format of the course:

- lectures
- discussion groups on concepts introduced in the papers
- presentation of language logs
- solving empirical problems in class and at home (assignments)
- student presentations of relevant literature
- original research

Grading is based on:

8 language logs @ 2.5% each	20%
3 group presentations @ 5% each	15%
3 assignments @ 5% each	15%
Final paper (based on language log)	
- topic (one sentence)	2%
- proposal (one paragraph)	3%
- outline (2 pages)	5%
- class presentation	10%
- written version	30%

Language log: Each student will identify a language that s/he will report on throughout the course. The logs will be based on the reading materials: the student will find data from the language that is relevant to issues discussed in a particular paper. The logs can be based on either the “core” or the “additional” readings.

Requirements for group presentations: Each student will participate in 3 group presentations; the groups will be different each time. The topic of the presentation is an article selected from the “additional readings” list. The goal is to present the central proposal of the paper, identify the empirical issues involved, and work through one or two examples in detail. The presentations will be 15 minutes each, followed by discussion. The group must provide a handout (maximum 6 pages) or use PowerPoint.

Requirements for individual presentations: Each student will give a presentation of their research paper. The presentation will be 15 minutes, followed by a 5-minute discussion period. The handout is a maximum of 6 pages.

Requirements for the research paper: The goal is to identify an empirical or theoretical problem concerning subjects, present a data set that bears on it, assess the implications of the analysis and work through at least one representation using the relevant syntactic formalism. Format: 20 pages maximum, 12-point font, 1.5 line spacing, 1-inch margins.

Attendance: Attendance and active participation in all lectures is required.

Core readings:

- Anderson, S. 1976. On the notion of subject in ergative languages. In C. Li (ed.), *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press. 1-24.
- Alexiadou, A. & E. Anagnostopoulou (1998) Parametrizing Agr: word order, verb-movement and EPP-checking. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 16.3: 491-539.
- Bresnan, J. & J. Kanerva. 1989. Locative inversion in Chichewa: A case study of factorization in grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20: 1-50.
- Chomsky, N. 1965. *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. MIT Press. (Chapter 2)
- Keenan, Ed. 1976b. Towards a universal definition of ‘subject of’ in C. Li (ed.), *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press. 303-333.
- Koopman, H. & D. Sportiche. 1991, The position of subjects, *Lingua* 85, 211-258.
- Kratzer, A. 1996. Severing the external argument from its verb. In J. Rooryck & L. Zaring (eds.), *Phrase structure and the lexicon*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 109-138.
- McCloskey, J. 1997. Subjecthood and subject positions. In L. Haegeman (ed.), *Elements of grammar*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 197-235.
- Perlmutter, D. & P. Postal. 1983. The relational succession law. In D. Perlmutter (ed.), *Studies in relational grammar I*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 30-80.
- Pollock, J.-Y. 1989. Verb movement, universal grammar and the structure of IP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20, 365–424.
- Schachter, P. 1976. The subject in Philippine languages: Topic, Actor, Actor-topic, or none of the above. In C. Li (ed.), *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press. 493–518.
- Stowell, T. 1983. Subjects across categories. *The Linguistic Review*. 2/3:285–312

Additional readings:

- Aissen, J. 1999. Markedness and subject choice in Optimality Theory. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 17: 673-711.
- Bell, S. 1983. Advancements and ascensions in Cebuano. In D. Perlmutter (ed.), *Studies in relational grammar I*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 143-218.
- Bobaljik, J. & D. Jonas. 1996. Subject positions and the roles of TP. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27: 195-236.
- Branigan, P. 1996. Verb-second and the A-bar syntax of subjects. *Studia Linguistica* 50: 50-79.
- Guilfoyle, E., H. Hung & L. Travis. 1992. Spec of IP and Spec of VP: Two subjects in Austronesian languages. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 10: 375-414.
- Keenan, E. 1976a. Remarkable subjects in Malagasy. In C. Li (ed.) *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press. 249-301.
- Kuroda, S.-Y. 1988. Whether we agree or not: a comparative syntax of English and Japanese. *Linguisticae Investigationes* 12: 1-47. Reprinted in W. J. Poser (ed.), *Japanese Syntax*. Stanford: CSLI. 103-144.
- Massam, D. 2001. On predication and the status of subjects in Niuean. In W. Davies & S. Dubinsky (eds.) *Objects and other subjects*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 225-246.
- Mathieu, E. 2006. Quirky subjects in Old French. *Studia Linguistica* 60: 282-312
- McCloskey, J. 2001. The distribution of subject properties in Irish. In W. Davies & S. Dubinsky (eds.) *Objects and other subjects*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 157-192.
- Payne, T. 1982. Role and reference related subject properties and ergativity in Yup'ik Eskimo and Tagalog, *Studies in Language* 6: 75-106.
- Perlmutter, D. 1984. Working 1s and inversion in Italian, Japanese and Quechua. In D. Perlmutter & C. Rosen (eds.), *Studies in relational grammar 2*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 292-330.
- Pesetsky, D. & Torrego, E. 2001. T-to-C movement: Causes and consequences. In M. Kenstowicz (ed.) *Ken Hale: A life in language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 355-426.
- Richards, N. 2000. Another Look at Tagalog Subjects. In I. Paul, V. Phillips, & L. Travis (eds.), *Formal issues in Austronesian linguistics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 105-116.

LINGUIST9600B - Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments/presentations
1.	Introduction		
2.	Definition of subject	Chomsky 1965; Keenan 1976b	
3.		Schachter 1976	ASSIGNMENT #1
4.	Ergativity	Anderson 1976	Group presentations
5.	Relational Grammar	Perlmutter & Postal 1983	Topic of final paper (1 sentence)
6.	Lexical-Functional Grammar	Bresnan & Kanerva 1989	ASSIGNMENT #2
7.	Small Clauses	Stowell 1983	Group presentations
8.	Base position of subjects I	Koopman & Sportiche 1991	Proposal for research paper (1 paragraph)
9.	Articulated IP	Pollock 1989	ASSIGNMENT #3
10.	Base position of subjects II	Kratzer 1996	Group presentations
11.	Subject positions	McCloskey 1997	Outline of final paper (2 pages)
12.	What counts as a subject?	Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998	Presentations of final paper
13.	Conclusion		Presentations of final paper