

LINGUIST 9601A/4248A
(Advanced) Syntactic Analysis

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Course Description

The goal of this course is to explore the syntactic approaches to the language structure. More specifically, we will focus on the Minimalist Program and will look at a range of topics (e.g. argument structure, case, binding). In parallel, students will develop a broader understanding of generative syntax and its puzzles. Students will also read original research articles on the topics from older and current literature.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students should:

- understand, describe and approach syntactic problems in natural languages from the minimalist perspective;
- feel confident reading formal syntactic literature;
- be able to present and critique research papers;
- be able to apply a theoretical analyses to original data;
- feel confident about doing original research within the provided framework.

Format of the course:

- lectures
- exercises and practice
- discussions on the concepts introduced in the papers
- group presentations
- solving empirical problems in class and at home (assignments)
- original research

Textbook and Required Readings:

- Hornstein, Norbert, Jairo Nunes and Kleanthes Grohmann. 2005. Understanding Minimalism. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Other readings will be available through the library and course reserves.

Grading is based on:

in-class participation, activities etc.	10%
2 group presentations	20%
3 assignments	30%
final paper	40%
topic	1%
proposal	4%
outline (2 pages)	5%
final paper	30%

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

Group Presentations:

Each student will participate in 2 group presentations. The goal is to read and present the central proposal of the paper, identify the empirical issues discussed, explain the important examples and outline possible implications. The presentation will be 20-30 minutes, depending on the article length and number of students in a group. It will be followed by discussion. The group will provide a handout or PowerPoint slides.

Assignments

Students will work on empirical data related to the issues discussed in class. The assignments will require them to use the key concepts, strength of the proposals and possible alternatives.

Research Paper

The goal is to further explore one of the syntactic issues addressed in class: students discuss the data, the issue(s) and the central proposal(s). Format: 20-pages maximum, 12-point font, 1.5 line spacing, 1-inch margins.

Core Readings (to be expanded during the course)

McCloskey, J. 1997. Subjecthood and subject positions. In L. Haegeman (ed.), *Elements of grammar*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. 197-235.

Polinsky, M., Preminger, O. 2014. Case and grammatical relations. In: *Routledge Handbook of Syntax*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. 150-167.

Barss, A. & Lasnik, H. 1986. A Note on Anaphora and Double Objects

Calendar (Subject to change)

	Topics	Assignments/Presentations
Week 1 Sept 12	Introduction	
Week 2 Sept 19	The Minimalist Program	
Week 3 Sept 26	Architecture of Grammar	
Week 4 Oct 3	Theta Theory	Assignment 1 Presentation 1
Week 5 Oct 16	Case	Presentation 2
Week 6 Oct 23	Case	Presentation 3 Topic of final paper
Week 7 Oct 30	Movement and Minimality	Presentation 4
Week 8 Nov 6	Linearization	Assignment Presentation 1 Proposal for research paper

Week 9 Nov 13	Binding	Presentation 2
Week 10 Nov 20	Binding	Presentation 3
Week 11 Nov 27	Features	Presentation 4 Outline of final paper
Week 12 Dec 5	Syntax-Morphology Interface/Derivation by Phase	Assignment 3

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth **less** than 10% must contact the instructor and follow the course specific instructions provided on the course outline. Final examinations must be written at the scheduled time unless formal alternative arrangements for a Special Examination have been approved (by the instructor, the Department and the Home Faculty Dean's Office) based on valid documented grounds.

A downloadable Student Medical Certificate can be found here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Support services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness website http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Statement on Plagiarism, Cheating and other Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence in the Academic Handbook available on the Academic Calendar website, here:

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg113.html>

Policy on Attendance

"Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of Registration." (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/examinations.html)

Important Academic Information for Students Taking Courses in the Department of French Studies

http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic_information/index.html