

Advanced Syntax: Issues in Modern Syntactic Theory

CAS LX 423, GRS LX 723 – Spring 2019

<i>Meeting time:</i>	Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00-12:15, Location: PSY B55
<i>Instructor:</i>	Snejana Iovtcheva [snɛ. 'ʒɑ:.nɑ: 'yov.tʃe.vɑ:]
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<i>Office Hours:</i>	W 12:00-1:00, Thurs 3:30-4:30 (and by appointment)

Prerequisite: CAS LX 422/GRS LX 722 (Intermediate Syntax)

Description: This course builds on the basic foundation of sentential structure introduced in Intermediate Syntax (CAS LX 422/GRS LX 722) and offers an exploration of advanced topics in syntax in relation to recent minimalist conceptions regarding the design of the language faculty. The broad issue of interest this semester is the central idea of syntactic locality and the observation that structural operations such as argument selection, agreement, syntactic binding, and movement seem to apply in limited domains. Through active engagement with primary literature, we will address a range of syntactic phenomena, accounts proposed for them, and their theoretical implications. Topics will include:

- the properties of the operation Merge: phrase structure and movement;
- wh-movement, superiority, intervention, and islands;
- units of the syntactic derivation: phases/cycles and their size;
- the operation Agree: phi-features, feature-checking, probes and goals, intervention.

In addition to the areas covered as a class, each student will also select a topic to investigate independently as a course project. The course project will result in a short paper at the end, and will be presented in class as part of a miniature conference at the end of the semester.

Learning objectives:

Students completing this course will:

- gain experience reading, understanding, and evaluating primary literature in syntax;
- learn how to think about, articulate and apply theoretical concepts to novel data;
- gain experience related to the profession of Linguistics, the constructing of a paper, and the presenting in a conference setting;

Website

Lecture notes, readings and materials will be posted on the course [Blackboard page](#). Please make sure you have access to the course on learn.bu.edu.

Course Grading

Homework and readings	20%
2 in-class Group discussion leading	20%
Final project: proposal (March 20)	10%
Final project: draft (April 18)	10%
Final project: presentation and write-up	30%
Regular attendance, participation	10%

Course requirements

Attendance and participation. I expect active participation from all members of the class.

Homework. Homework will primarily consist of readings done in preparation for discussion in class. Readings will often be accompanied by short summaries or exercises that relate to the reading or extend it in some way. Students registered for GRS LX 723 will generally be assigned longer portions of the papers and have exercises or summaries relating to those additional portions as well; these additional exercises constitute part of the homework and are included in the “Homework” portion of the grading scheme below.

There is no single required textbook for this course. Readings will be drawn from the syntactic literature, generally journal articles or book chapters, which are provided as PDFs via the course Blackboard page. Here are some suggested textbooks and background readings for any topic in which you may wish to have additional grounding:

- Adger, David. 2003. *Core Syntax: A Minimalist Approach*. Oxford.
- Carnie, Andrew. 2012. *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. Third edition, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1986. Chapters 1 and 2 in *Knowledge of Language*.
- Sportiche Dominique, Hilda Koopman, and Ed Stabler. 2014. *An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Leading discussion. Everyone will lead the discussion on the readings twice during the course of the semester. These will be done in groups of two (or occasionally three). Leading the discussion will generally mean coming prepared with a synopsis of the proposal and the arguments, and some questions that arose. Leading the discussion will not be simply presenting the paper. Rather the focus is on distilling the main points and the strongest arguments, and then on discussing things that were confusing, seemed insufficiently convincing, or anything else pertinent. It is expected that the whole class will have questions and participate in the discussion; those leading the discussion are mainly responsible for getting the ball rolling and having some discussion points planned in advance.

Course project. In addition to the areas covered as a class, each student will also select a topic to investigate independently as a course project. The course project will result in a paper at the end, and will be presented in class as part of a miniature conference at the end of the semester. All students must write a final paper. For undergraduates, the paper will be roughly 6–8 pages, while for graduate students it will be 10–12 pages. The paper will focus on some topic that you’ve come across in your readings, or class discussions, raising a theoretical problem or extending the analyses and readings from class. The paper will tentatively be due on Thursday, May 2nd. (Final date subject to change.) I’ll ask that you meet with me to discuss your topic and submit a short 1-page (ungraded) proposal by Thursday, March 20 and have a rough draft ready by April 18. (see *How to* document on the Blackboard)

Final Presentations: During the last week of class, students will give a 20 minute presentation of their final paper topic. (see *How to* document on the Blackboard)

Late assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangement.

Rules of note

- **Talk to me:** I am committed to helping you succeed in this course. Please don't hesitate to contact me. For questions about content, homework, or readings, send me an email or set up an appointment with me. If my office hours are not convenient for you, I will be happy to schedule an appointment at a time that works for both you and me. In extreme cases, alternative arrangements can be made for some of the course requirements, but only by talking to me first.
- **Disabilities:** Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs and to discuss potential accommodations. I rely on the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. Please see <https://www.bu.edu/disability/> for more information make arrangement within the first two weeks of the semester.
- **Integrity:** The use of others' ideas or expressions without citation is plagiarism, and will not be tolerated. You must declare all sources in submitted work. Citations don't need to be in any particular format, but they have to be there. Academic dishonesty will result in failure of the relevant assignment and will be reported to the University. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, or what the consequences are, go to <https://www.bu.edu/cgsnow/academics/plagiarism-academic-misconduct/>.
- **CAS/GRS Academic Conduct Code:** It is essential that you read and adhere to the CAS Student Academic Conduct Code. Graduate students must also follow the policies of the GRS Academic Conduct code.
 - <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>
 - <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/academic-discipline-procedures/>

Resources

Website

Lecture notes and additional readings will be posted on **Blackboard**. Please make sure you have access to the course on Blackboard.

Tree drawing

Here are a couple suggestions on how to draw syntax trees on the computer. You have several options for tree-drawing software:

1. Use the free online tool: <http://ironcreek.net/phpsyntaxtree/>
... and watch the short online tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUs13cuiVDM>.
2. Use one of the following Syntax Tree Drawing Fonts: Arboreal (Mac) or ArborWin (PC). Basically, all the "characters" in this font are branching nodes (or other components of a tree). These are available on Blackboard.
3. An online tree-generator: RSyntaxTree <https://yohasebe.com/rsyntaxtree/>
4. For LaTeX users, check out **qtrees**: <https://www.ctan.org/pkg/qtrees?lang=en> (after you download the package, you need in your preamble: `\usepackage{qtrees}`)
5. (Slowest option) Draw your trees using the drawing tool in MS Word (or another word processing program)

Schedule:

This plan is ambitious and subject to change and adjustments. Consult the course website. The readings in the Readings column are those that pertain to the lectures that week. Please, read them for the class they are listed by. (Optional readings are marked with *.)

Week 1		Overview 1: Structure building and movement	
T 1/22	<i>Syllabus, Topics, Requirements, Overview</i>		
R 1/24	Sportiche, Dominique, Hilda Koopman, and Edward P. Stabler. 2013. <i>An introduction to syntactic analysis and theory</i> . Wiley-Blackwell. §1–6		
Week 2		Overview 2: Probe-Goal Theory; Case and Agreement	
T 1/29	continued		
R 1/31	Citko, Barbara. 2014. Phase theory: An introduction. Cambridge University Press. §2–3.		
Week 3		Wh-movement, Subjacency and Islandhood	
T 2/5	Chomsky, Noam. 1977. On wh-movement. In <i>Formal syntax</i> , ed. Peter Culicover, Thomas Wasow, and Adrian Akmajian, 71–132. New York: Academic Press.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Island Conditions: subjacency and Condition on Extraction Domains (CED) - Successive-cyclicity of <i>wh</i>-movement: evidence - Unified views of finite and infinitival clauses: questions and relative clauses - Topicalization
R 2/7	Ross, James R. ("Haj Ross"). 1967. <i>Constraints on variables in syntax</i> . PhD dissertation, MIT. [pp. i-xi and 117-256] §4 *McCloskey, James. 2000. Quantifier float and <i>wh</i> -movement in an Irish English. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 31.57-84.		
Week 4		Towards a unified theory of Move and Merge	
T 2/12	Chomsky, Noam. 1993. A minimalist program for linguistic theory. <i>The view from building 20</i> , ed. by Ken Hale and Jay Keyser, 1-52. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. [read only pp. 34-44]		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to be in two places at once - <i>Late merge</i> and the interspersing of Move and Merge
R 2/14	Fox, Danny. 1999. Reconstruction, Binding Theory, and the Interpretation of Chains. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 30.157-196 [read or review through p. 175, focusing more on the "right theory" than on the "wrong" one; esp. section 2.2]		
Week 5		Relativized minimality; locality in movement	
T 2/19	NO Class, BU MONDAY CLASSES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wh-movement and its interaction with relativization and topicalization - Feature checking - <i>the Minimal Link Condition</i>
R 2/21	Rizzi, Luigi. 2001. Relativized minimality effects. In <i>The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory</i> , ed. Mark R. Baltin and Chris Collins, 89–110. Blackwell, Oxford.		
Week 6		Multiple wh-questions, Superiority effects	
T 2/26	Richards, Norvin. 1998 The Principle of Minimal Compliance. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 29:599–629.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - multiple specifiers - probes, goals, locality - 'tucking in'
R 2/28	Kotek, Hadas. 2014. Wh-fronting in a two-probe system. <i>Natural Language & Linguistic Theory</i> 32:1105–1143.		

Week 7	D-linking, wh-intervention	
T 3/5 R 3/7	<p>Pesetsky, David. 2000. Phrasal movement and its kin. MIT Press. §5.</p> <p>Beck, Sigrid. 2006. Intervention effects follow from focus interpretation. <i>Natural Language Semantics</i> 14:156.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superiority and <i>d(iscourse)-linking</i> - Superiority and (cross linguistic) <i>focus-sensitive operators</i>
Week 8	NO CLASSES - SPRING RECESS	
T 3/12 R 3/14		
Week 9	Wh-in-situ	
T 3/19 R 3/21	<p>Cheng, Lisa Lai-Shen. 2003. Wh-in-situ. <i>Glott International</i> 7:103–109.</p> <p>Huang, Cheng-Teh James. 1982. Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pages 450–502, 524–530.</p>	<p>Project proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>covert wh-movement</i> - LF and the position of the Q-morpheme - the <i>Empty Category Principle</i> - Conditions on Extraction Domain
Week 10	Successive cyclicity	
T 3/26 R 3/28	<p>van Urk, Cope and Norvin Richards. 2015. Two components of long-distance extraction: Successive cyclicity in Dinka. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 46:113–155.</p> <p>Legate, Julie Anne. 2003. Some interface properties of the phase. <i>Linguistic Analysis</i> 34:506–516.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long-distance movement and agreement dependency - Intermediate movement - Phases - Passive and unaccusative VPs - Phonological (PF) evidence
Week 11	More about A-bar constructions; pied piping	
T 4/2 T 4/4	<p>Cable, Seth. 2009. Against the Existence of Pied-Piping: Evidence from Tlingit. ms. UMass/Amherst.</p> <p>Coon, Jessica. 2009. Interrogative Possessors and the problem with pied-piping. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 40, 165-175</p> <p>Kotek, Hadas, and Michael Yoshitaka Erlewine. To appear. Covert pied-piping in English multiple wh-questions. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i>.</p>	<p>Project update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <i>Q-particle</i> - Triggers of movement - The Q(uestion) Projection - <i>covert pied-piping</i>
Week 12	Cyclic Linearization, object shift, scrambling, and islands	
T 4/9 R 4/11	<p>Kayne, Richard S. The antisymmetry of Syntax. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press. pp. 3-32</p> <p>Fox, Danny, and David Pesetsky. 2005. Cyclic linearization of syntactic structure. <i>Theoretical Linguistics</i> 31.</p> <p>*Ko, Heejeong. 2007. Asymmetries in Scrambling and Cyclic Linearization. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 38:49-83</p>	<p>Paper draft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word Order Linearization - Scandinavian object shift - Quantifier movement - <i>Spell-out</i> - the mapping between syntax and phonology

Week 13	ϕ-agreement and movement	
T 4/16	Preminger, Omer. 2011. <i>Agreement as a fallible operation</i> . Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.	- the operation <i>Agree</i> and its properties
R 4/18	Bejár, Susana, and Milan Rezac. 2009. Cyclic agree. <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 40:35–73.	- <i>Agree</i> and its interaction with cyclicity and locality - <i>person hierarchies</i>
Week 14	Pick a topic	
T 4/23	<i>The fine grained Left Periphery</i> <i>Ellipsis</i> <i>Parasitic Gaps</i> <i>The Structure of the DP</i> ...	
R 4/25	Presentations	
Week 15	Student Presentations	
T 4/30	Presentations	
W 5/2	Presentations	
	SEMESTER ENDS	

References:

- Béjar, Susana, and Milan Rezac. 2009. Cyclic agree. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40:35–73.
- Cheng, Lisa Lai-Shen. 2003. Wh-in-situ. *Glott International* 7:103–109.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1977. On Wh-movement. In *Formal syntax*, ed. Peter Culicover, Thomas Wasow, and Adrian Akmajian, 71–132. New York: Academic Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: the framework. In *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89–155. MIT Press.
- Citko, Barbara. 2014. *Phase theory: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Davis, Colin. 2018. Crossing and stranding at edges. Manuscript, MIT.
- Fox, Danny, and David Pesetsky. 2005. Cyclic linearization of syntactic structure. *Theoretical Linguistics* 31.
- Huang, Cheng-Teh James. 1982. *Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Kotek, Hadas. 2014. Wh-fronting in a two-probe system. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 32:1105–1143.
- Legate, Julie Anne. 2003. Some interface properties of the phase. *Linguistic Analysis* 34:506–516.
- Manzini, Maria Rita. 1992. *Locality: A theory and some of its empirical consequences*. MIT Press.
- Nevins, Andrew Ira. 2011. Multiple agree with clitics: Person complementarity vs. omnivorous number. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 29:939–971.
- Pesetsky, David. 2000. *Phrasal movement and its kin*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Preminger, Omer. 2011. *Agreement as a fallible operation*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Richards, Norvin. 1998. The principle of minimal compliance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 29:599–629.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 2001. Relativized minimality effects. In *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*, ed. Mark R. Baltin and Chris Collins, 89–110. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Ross, John Robert. 1967. *Constraints on variables in syntax*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Sportiche, Dominique, Hilda Koopman, and Edward P. Stabler. 2013. *An introduction to syntactic analysis and theory*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- van Urk, Coppe, and Norvin Richards. 2015. Two components of long-distance extraction: Successive cyclicity in Dinka. *Linguistic Inquiry* 46:113–155.