Details of final project (repeating from syllabus)

— A proposal is due on March 13 in class (or before). The proposal is not a huge project; it should contain a description of the area you plan to research, with as many specifics as possible. It should include references to at least a couple of papers which seem to be relevant to the topic and which you plan to read. The whole thing should probably be 1–2 pages long (although you are free to go as high as 5 pages), but it is important to have thought about the area. It is suggested that you run it by me first so that I can warn you if the topic looks unmanageably large, for example.

— The project will be basically to read and absorb a reasonable amount of the literature that you can find on the topic you’ve chosen. Having read around five papers on the topic would probably be appropriate, but this would vary depending on how hard or lengthy the papers area.

— The paper will be a summary of what you’ve discovered, at most 20 pages long, which will summarize what you’ve found, compare the approaches of the different authors, and provide a certain amount of critical commentary. The paper is due just after the last day of class (the day before finals period).

— The presentation is a summary of your paper, given to the class—it will be something like the presentations of the papers you will have been giving, except it will be on topics that the class won’t in general have prior knowledge of from readings. These presentations will be about 20 minutes long with 10 minutes afterwards for discussion & questions.

Some possible areas in which to find topics

- Syntax of ASL (agreement, wh-movement, …)

- Distributed morphology (syntactic aspects of morphology)

- The syntax of clitics

- Syntax of “polysynthetic” languages

- Syntactic effects of “focus”

- Ergativity

- Syntax of VSO languages
  Possible starting point: Andrew Carnie (ed.), forthcoming book on VSO languages. McCloskey (various), Carnie (various).

- Wh-agreement, scope marking, partial wh-movement

- Multiple wh-movement

- Wh-in-situ