

Ling 254/654: Syntax II — Locality in Syntax

Fall 2018, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:35–12:50, LOCATION

Teaching staff

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Description

A key topic in the theory of syntax is that operations apply in limited domains. These involve restrictions on argument selection, agreement, syntactic binding, and movement. This class aims to explore a range of syntactic phenomena, accounts proposed for them, and their theoretical implications, especially in relation to recent minimalist conceptions regarding the design of the language faculty. We concentrate in particular on locality constraints on agreement and movement, presented through the lens of the contemporary probe-goal approach to Agree. We will use this backdrop to further develop the theory of grammar established in Syntax I.

The phenomena to be discussed will relate in particular to (a) how the syntactic (computational, structure building) component of grammar interacts with, and is limited by, the systems it interfaces with (specifically, PF and LF), and (b) parameters of grammar assumed to capture cross-linguistic variation.

Theoretical topics addressed will include (at least some aspects of) the following:

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

Throughout, a major goal of the course will be teaching students to read primary literature in syntax, and getting them to think about applying theoretical concepts to novel data.

Website

Lecture notes and additional readings and materials will be posted on Canvas. Please make sure you have access to the course on [Canvas](#).

Course expectations

1. **Attendance and participation:** I expect active participation from all members of the class.
2. **Readings:** You are expected to do the readings prior to the class in which they will be discussed. Some weeks I will ask you to write short (2-page) responses to the readings, including (i) a brief summary of the argumentation in the article and (ii) a question that occurred to you while you were reading. These summaries will be due the day before the relevant class: I will use the questions that you raise to guide our class discussion.
3. **Language notebook:** Please pick a language (other than English) with which you are familiar. During the course of the term, you will keep a notebook in which you sketch (some of) the relevant data in your chosen language and possible analyses relating to the topics we discuss in class. This can be done through work with a native speaker, with grammars, or with published papers on your language. Please come to see me periodically to discuss your progress! The data you collect in your language notebook can lead to one or both of your paper topics.
4. **Written Papers:** All students must write two papers. For undergraduates, they will be roughly 4–5 pages each, while for graduate students the second paper will be 10–12 pages. The papers will focus some topic that you've come across in your language notebook, readings, or class discussions, raising a theoretical problem or extending the analyses and readings from class. The first paper will be due on **Tuesday, March 26th**, and the final paper will tentatively be due on **Thursday, May 2rd**. (Final date subject to change.)
5. **Final Presentations** During the last week of class, students will make a brief (10 minute) presentation of their final paper topic.

Grading

Grades will be posted to the canvas course site, and they will not be curved — you will be assessed on your personal progress towards the learning objectives of the course, not on your performance in comparison to other students.

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| 1. Attendance and participation | (10%) |
| 2. Reading responses | (30%) |
| 3. Paper 1 and language notebook | (30%) |
| 4. Paper 2 and presentation | (30%) |

Your participation grade will be determined on the basis of your attendance, contributions to discussions, and effort displayed outside of class hours. By the end of the term, I should be able to remember specific occasions in which you contributed a (good) question or comment to the class discussion.

Textbook and course materials

There is no single required textbook for this course this year. **Attendance at lectures is therefore crucial.** We'll be building up syntactic structures on our own in class. There will be some required readings assigned, and additional papers will be suggested as background reading. All suggested and required readings will be provided as PDFs via Canvas.

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.

You will be required to submit **TYPED** solutions to assignments. You will need to learn how to draw syntax trees on the computer in order to complete your assignments. For this, you will need some tree-drawing software. You have several options:

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). (Be sure to read the instructions, particularly re: spacing in .doc files, which must be set to "exactly 12 point" – email Hadas for access to these fonts. I'll try to put them up on Canvas, but there have been glitches posting font files in the past.)
3. Download TreeForm: <http://sourceforge.net/projects/treeform>
4. Download RSyntaxTree: <http://www.yohasebe.com/rsyntaxtree/>
5. For LaTeX users, check out *qtree* and other options here (click on "Trees" in the menu): <http://www.essex.ac.uk/linguistics/external/clmt/latex4ling/>
6. (Slowest option) Draw your trees using the drawing tool in MS Word (or another word processing program)

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 Resource Office on Disabilities (ROD) for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. Please submit your accommodations form to me in person outside of class (e.g. office hours) within the first two weeks of the semester. To do so:
 1. get a Course Accommodation Request from the ROD, and
 2. contact the ROD at 203-432-2324 (voice), 203-432-8250 (fax), 203-432-8250 (tty/tdd), or see <http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/resource-office-disabilities> for more information.
- **Cooperation:** You may discuss homework assignments with other students. However, you must always submit your own write-up, and you must list the students who you worked with on your assignment.
- **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. Moreover, although you may discuss homework assignments, you may not look at another student's written work before submitting your own; in addition, you may not allow another student to copy from your work, or show another student your written work before you turn it in.

Academic dishonesty will result in failure of the relevant assignment or exam and be reported to the University. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, or what the consequences are, go to <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism>.
- **Participation:** As the instructor, I will be doing a large portion of the talking in class, but the course will be vastly improved by you, the students, sharing your ideas and asking your questions. If you have a question, there is probably at least one other person with the same question. Ask it; others will be grateful you did. If what I've said is hard to follow, or if you think I've made a mistake, let me know right away. It's easiest to fix problems as they come. Moreover, when I ask questions, I typically expect answers. Don't be shy! I will wait.

Schedule

This plan is ambitious and subject to change. Consult the course website.

(Optional readings are marked with *.)

Week 1 — Overview: Syntax, grammar and the language faculty (1/15/2019)

- Sportiche, Dominique, Hilda Koopman, and Edward P. Stabler. 2013. *An introduction to syntactic analysis and theory*. Wiley-Blackwell. §1–6.

Week 2 — Probe-goal theory; Merge (1/22/2019)

- Citko, Barbara. 2014. *Phase theory: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press. §2–3.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: the framework. In *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89–155. MIT Press.

Week 3 — Wh-movement and islandhood (1/29/2019)

- Ross, John Robert. 1967. *Constraints on variables in syntax*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. §4.
- Engdahl, Elisabet. 1997. Relative clause extractions in context. In *Working papers in Scandinavian syntax* 60, 51–79.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1977. On *wh*-movement. In *Formal syntax*, ed. Peter Culicover, Thomas Wasow, and Adrian Akmajian, 71–132. New York: Academic Press.

Week 4 — Relativized minimality (2/5/2019)

- Rizzi, Luigi. 2001. Relativized minimality effects. In *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*, ed. Mark R. Baltin and Chris Collins, 89–110. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Aravind, Athulya. 2017. A-bar interactions and feature geometries. In *A pesky set: Papers for David Pesetsky*, 333–342. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.
- *Pesetsky, David. 1982. *Paths and categories*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Part II, §3.1:267–272, §4.0–4.3: 277–305.
- *Villata, Sandra, Luigi Rizzi, and Julie Franck. 2016. Intervention effects and Relativized Minimality: New experimental evidence from graded judgments. *Lingua* 179:76–96.
- *Rizzi, Luigi. 1990. *Relativized Minimality*. MIT Press.

Week 5 — Superiority and wh-intervention (2/12/2019)

- Richards, Norvin. The Principle of Minimal Compliance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 29:599–629.
- Kotek, Hadas. 2014. *Wh*-fronting in a two-probe system. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 32:1105–1143.
- Pesetsky, David. 2000. *Phrasal movement and its kin*. MIT Press. §5.
- *Beck, Sigrid. 2006. Intervention effects follow from focus interpretation. *Natural Language Semantics* 14:156.

Week 6 — Wh-in-situ (2/19/2019)

- Cheng, Lisa Lai-Shen. 2003. *Wh*-in-situ. *Glott International* 7:103–109.
- Huang, Cheng-Teh James. 1982. *Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pages 492–502, 524–530.

Week 7 — Phases, successive cyclicity (2/26/2019)

- van Urk, Coppe and Norvin Richards. 2015. Two components of long-distance extraction: Successive cyclicity in Dinka. *Linguistic Inquiry* 46:113–155.
- Chung, Sandra. 1994. *Wh*-agreement and “referentiality” in Chamorro. *Linguistic Inquiry* 25:1–44.
- Rackowski, Andrea, and Norvin Richards. 2005. Phase edge and extraction: A Tagalog case study. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36:565–599.
- Legate, Julie Anne. 2003. Some interface properties of the phase. *Linguistic Analysis* 34:506–516.
- *Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: a life in language*. MIT Press.

Week 8 — Cyclic linearization (3/5/2019)

- Fox, Danny, and David Pesetsky. 2005. Cyclic linearization of syntactic structure. *Theoretical Linguistics* 31.
- Davis, Colin. 2018. *Crossing and stranding at edges*. Manuscript, MIT.

Week 9–10 — Spring Break

Week 11 — ϕ -agreement (3/26/2019)

- Preminger, Omer. 2011. *Agreement as a fallible operation*. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. §1.
- Bejár, Susana, and Milan Rezac. 2009. Cyclic agree. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40:35–73.
- Polinsky, Maria, and Eric Potsdam. 2001. Long-distance agreement and topic in Tsez. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 19:583–646.
- Kucěrová, Ivona. 2016. Long-distance agreement in Icelandic: locality restored. *Journal of Comparative German Linguistics* 19:49–74.

Week 12 — Selective probes (4/2/2019)

- Nevins, Andrew. 2011. Multiple Agree with clitics: person complementarity vs. omnivorous number. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 29:939–971.
- Deal, Amy Rose. 2015. Interaction and satisfaction in ϕ -agreement. In *Proceedings of NELS 45*, ed. Thuy Bui and Deniz Özyildiz, 1–14. Amherst, MA:GLSA.

Week 13 — Defective intervention (4/9/2019)

- Hartman, Jeremy. 2012. (Non-)intervention in A-movement: Some cross-constructural and cross-linguistic considerations. *Linguistic Variation* 11(2):121–148.
- Bruening, Benjamin. Defects of defective intervention. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45:707–719.

Week 14 — Pick your favorite topic (4/16/2019)

- Syntactic ergativity / extraction asymmetries
- Hyper-raising (Unlocking)
- Anti-locality
- The fine-grained left periphery
- Your suggestions. . .

Week 15 — Student presentations (4/23/2019)

References

- Aoun, Joseph, and Yen-hui Audrey Li. 2003. *Essays on the representational and derivational nature of grammar: The diversity of wh-constructions*. Linguistic Inquiry Monographs. MIT Press.
- Aravind, Athulya. 2017. A-bar interactions and feature geometries. In *A pesky set: Papers for David Pesetsky*, ed. Claire Halpert, Hadas Kotek, and Coppe van Urk, 333–342. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.
- Béjar, Susana, and Milan Rezac. 2009. Cyclic agree. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40:35–73.
- Bruening, Benjamin. 2014. Defects of defective intervention. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45:707–719.
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- Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: a life in language*. MIT Press.
- Chung, Sandra. 1994. *Wh*-agreement and “referentiality” in Chamorro. *Linguistic Inquiry* 25:1–44.
- Citko, Barbara. 2014. *Phase theory: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Davis, Colin. 2018. Crossing and stranding at edges. Manuscript, MIT.
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- Engdahl, Elisabet. 1997. Relative clause extractions in context. In *Working papers in Scandinavian syntax* 60, 51–79.
- Fox, Danny, and David Pesetsky. 2005. Cyclic linearization of syntactic structure. *Theoretical Linguistics* 31.
- Halpert, Claire. 2018. Raising, unphased. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* .
- Hartman, Jeremy. 2011. (Non-)intervention in A-movement: Some cross-constructional and cross-linguistic considerations. *Linguistic Variation* 11:121–148.
- 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.
- Kučerová, Ivona. 2016. Long-distance agreement in Icelandic: locality restored. *Journal of Comparative German Linguistics* 19:49–74.
- 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.
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- Preminger, Omer. 2011. Agreement as a fallible operation. Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Rackowski, Andrea, and Norvin Richards. 2005. Phase edge and extraction: A Tagalog case study. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36:565–599.
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- Rizzi, Luigi. 1990. *Relativized minimality*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- 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.
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