EL5101 Grammatical Analysis

National University of Singapore

2016–2017 Semester 1, Tuesdays 18:00–21:00, AS5-0202

Instructor

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Office: AS5 06-09

Office hours: Wednesdays 10 am – 12 noon and by appointment

Description

> "A logical theory may be tested by its capacity for dealing with puzzles, and it is a wholesome plan, in thinking about logic, to stock the mind with as many puzzles as possible, since these serve much the same purpose as is served by experiments in physical science."
>
> Russell (1905, 484–485)

This course is a graduate-level introduction to modern syntactic theory. Emphasis will be placed on the the process of analysis and argumentation. Empirically, the course will cover a range of grammatical phenomena in English and other languages, to "stock the mind with as many puzzles as possible," and to motivate and evaluate hypotheses under discussion. Students will complete the class with both the technical expertise and theoretical foundation to comfortably approach a range of work in contemporary syntactic literature.

Website

- Lecture notes will be posted on the public website, `https://mitcho.com/nus/gram2016/`
- IVLE will be used for submitting assignments and posting additional readings. Please make sure you are in the **EL5101** module on IVLE.

Textbook

Adger, David. 2003. *Core Syntax: A Minimalist Approach*. Oxford. We will use almost all of this book, so you should buy a copy.[1] Additional readings will be on IVLE.

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[1] If you search online, I know you can easily find a PDF for this book, but *that PDF is not of the final, published version of the book* so there may be important differences. I haven't checked. You have been warned.

Requirements

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following:

1. **Attendance and participation (10%):** Active attendance, participation in class, and preparation (doing the readings) are crucial for success in the class.

2. **Problem sets (5 × 6% = 30%):** Problem sets are an opportunity to apply the techniques developed in class and in the readings to original data.

3. **Quiz (5%):** The quiz will test knowledge of the empirical phenomena covered in the first half of class.

4. **Language report (25%):** Students will study one aspect of an unfamiliar language though elicitation with a native speaker. Guidelines on possible topics will be given later. The language must be a language that (a) you are not a native speaker of and (b) cannot be English, Singlish, Mandarin Chinese, or Singapore Malay. Should be approximately ten pages. Due **Friday, November 11th**.

5. **Final exam (30%):** The final exam (the morning of **Thursday, December 1st**) will test knowledge of the empirical phenomena covered in class and application of the concepts of the class to new data and puzzles.

If you registered for EL5101R or EL6880:

1. Attendance and participation **(5%)**
2. Problem sets **(5 × 4% = 20%)**
3. Quiz (5%)
4. Language report **(2 × 20% = 40%)**: EL5101R and EL6880 students must write two language reports, on two different topics in the same language. One will be due **Tuesday, October 18th**. The second is due Friday, November 11th.
5. Final exam (30%): The final exam will be different from that for EL5101.

Schedule

The schedule is subject to change. Consult the website. CS refers to *Core Syntax*.

Date	Topic
Aug 9	**National Day: No class**
Aug 16	Grammatical knowledge; constituency
	Reading: CS1, CS3.2; optional: Chomsky (1986)
Aug 23	Building structure
	Reading: CS2, 3, 4.2
Aug 30	Argument asymmetries, *v*P
	Reading: CS4; optional: Barss and Lasnik (1986)
	Submit: Problem Set 1
Sep 6	Subjects
	Reading: CS6.1–6.2; optional: McCloskey (1997)
Sep 13	More subjects
	Reading: CS4.5, 6.4
	Submit: Problem Set 2
Sep 20	**Recess Week: No class**
Sep 27	Case and agreement
	Reading: Pesetsky and Torrego (2011), CS6.3
	Submit: Problem Set 3
Oct 4	Auxiliaries and head movement (+ **Quiz**)
	Reading: CS5
Oct 11	Embedded clauses
	Reading: CS8
	Submit: Problem Set 4
Oct 18	*Wh*-movement
	Reading: CS9
	Submit: **Extra language report due for EL5101R/6880**
Oct 25	More movement
	Reading: CS10
Nov 1	PF and Spell-Out
	Reading: TBA
	Submit: Problem Set 5
Nov 8	Ellipsis
	Reading: TBA

Friday, November 11: **language report due**
Thursday, December 1, morning: **final exam**

Rules of note

- **Cooperation:** You encouraged to discuss the problem sets with other students. However, you must always submit your own write-up, and you should list the students who you worked with on your assignment.

- **Integrity:** The use of others' ideas or expressions without citation is plagiarism. You must declare all sources in submitted work. Citations don't need to be in any particular format, but they have to be there.

- **Talk to me:** I want you to succeed in this class. If any material or requirement is unclear, let me know. In extreme cases, alternative arrangements can be made for some of the course requirements, but only by talking to me first.

References

Adger, David. 2003. *Core syntax: A minimalist approach.* Oxford University Press.

Barss, Andrew, and Howard Lasnik. 1986. A note on anaphora and double objects. *Linguistic Inquiry* 17:347–354.

Chomsky, Noam. 1986. Knowledge of language as a focus of inquiry. In *Knowledge of language: Its nature, origin, and use*, 1–14. Praeger.

McCloskey, James. 1997. Subjecthood and subject positions. In *Elements of grammar*, ed. Liliane Haegeman, 197–235. Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Pesetsky, David, and Esther Torrego. 2011. Case. In *Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*. Oxford University Press.

Russell, Bertrand. 1905. On denoting. *Mind* 14:479–493.