



Linguistics Modules - Module Information Sheet

2018/19

1. General information

Module Code	PLIN0023	Title	Current Issues in Syntax					Credits	15
Module Tutor	Ad Neeleman			Contact	a.neeleman@ucl.ac.uk				
Other tutor(s)									
Module available at the following levels									
Level 4 UG		Level 5 UG		Level 6 UG	X	Level 7 UG		Level 7 PG	X
Module description									
<p>Module outline: This course introduces students to a recent theory of a specific topic or a series of related topics in generative syntax.</p> <p>Module aims: This course explores current analyses of one or more specific topics in syntactic theory. Examples from previous years are the encoding of grammatical dependencies, the mapping between syntax and information structure, and the relation between syntax and morphology.</p> <p>Module objectives: To enable students to understand current issues in syntactic theory. To enable students to evaluate conflicting proposals critically. To enable them to adjust existing proposals in the light of new data and to test their adjustments.</p> <p>Symmetry and Asymmetry in Syntax</p> <p>In this course we explore the problem of left-right asymmetries, which can be observed for a range of dependencies. For example, negative polarity items are typically preceded by their trigger, and bound-variable pronouns are typically preceded by the quantifier binding them. This suggests that c-command is uniformly left-to-right. However, standard conditions on syntactic representations permit trees in which c-command is right-to-left, and therefore they also permit backward licensing of negative polarity items and backward binding of bound-variable pronouns. Thus, the data clash with the theory.</p> <p>This problem was brought to the fore in Kayne's monograph on antisymmetry. Kayne proposed that the standard view of syntactic representations was wrong, and that c-command and linear order should be linked in a way that rules out right-to-left binding.</p> <p>There is now good evidence (some of which we will review) that antisymmetry does not provide a correct representation of syntax. This of course implies that a new analysis must be developed for left-right asymmetries. We first discuss in some detail in which structures right-to-left c-command can be found, considering both Dutch and English. Then, we turn to possible restrictions on dependencies, and the extent to which they are supported by currently available evidence. In addition, students will work in groups on specific problems that bear on the general issue of left-right asymmetries</p>									
Prerequisites	Two years of undergraduate syntax								
Timetable	https://timetable.ucl.ac.uk/tt/moduleTimet.do?firstReq=Y&moduleId=PLIN0023								

Week by week summary

The initial plan for the course is given below. We will not necessarily follow this in detail – topics may be skipped or added based on discussion in class.

1. The Problem

Barss, Andrew, and Howard Lasnik. 1986. A note on anaphora and double objects. *Linguistic Inquiry* 17: 347–354.
Larson, Richard. 1988. On the double-object construction. *Linguistic Inquiry* 19: 335–391.
Kayne, Richard. 1994. *The Antisymmetry of Syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

2. Dutch PP-over-V

Abels, Klaus, and Ad Neeleman. 2012. Linear asymmetries and the LCA. *Syntax* 15: 25–74.
Barbiers, Sjef. 1995. *The Syntax of Interpretation* (Chapter 4). PhD dissertation, Leiden University. (https://www.meertens.knaw.nl/cms/files/SBProefschrift0873_001.pdf)
Cinque, Guglielmo. 2005. Deriving Greenberg's Universal 20 and its exceptions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36: 315–332.
Neeleman, Ad. 2017. PP-over-V meets Universal 20. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 20: 3-47.

3. The OV/VO Parameter

Haider, Hubert. 2014. *Symmetry Breaking in Syntax*. Cambridge: CUP.
Janke, Vikki, and Ad Neeleman. 2012. Ascending and descending VPs in English. *Linguistic Inquiry* 43: 151-190.
Zwart, C. Jan-Wouter. 1993. *Dutch Syntax: A Minimalist Approach*. PhD dissertation, University of Groningen.

4. PP extraposition

Johnson, Kyle. 1991. Object positions. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 9: 577–636.
Neeleman, Ad, and Amanda Payne. 2018. PP extraposition and the order of adverbials in English. Ms. UCL/University of Delaware
Pesetsky, David. 1989. Language-particular processes and the Earliness Principle. Ms., MIT.

5. Exceptional Case Marking

Lasnik, Howard. 1999. Chains of arguments. In S. Epstein and N. Hornstein (eds.) *Working Minimalism* (pp. 189–215). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Neeleman, Ad, and Amanda Payne. 2018. On Matrix Clause Intervention in Acl Constructions. Ms. UCL/University of Delaware.
Runner, Jeffrey, and Keir Moulton. 2017. The Accusative Plus Infinitive Construction in English. In M. Everaert and H. van Riemsdijk (eds.) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Syntax* (Second Edition). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

6. Precede-and-Command

Barker, Chris. 2012. Quantificational binding does not require c-command. *Linguistic Inquiry* 43: 614–633.
Bruening, Benjamin. 2014. Precede-and-command revisited. *Language* 90: 342–388.
Ernst, Thomas. 1994. M-command and precedence. *Linguistic Inquiry* 25: 327–335.
Jackendoff, Ray. 1990. On Larson's account of the double object construction. *Linguistic Inquiry* 21: 427–454.

7. GPAD, Parasitic Gaps and Phrasal Movement

Williams, Edwin. 1997. Blocking and Anaphora. *Linguistic Inquiry* 28: 577–617.
Overfelt, Jason. 2015. Unbounded Successive-Cyclic Rightward DP-Movement. *Lingua* 162: 1–31.

8. Pesetsky Paradoxes

Pesetsky, David. 1995. *Zero Syntax: Experiencers and cascades*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Lechner, Winfried. 2003. Phrase structure paradoxes, movement and ellipsis. In *The interfaces: Deriving and interpreting omitted structures*, ed. by Kerstin Schwabe and Susanne Winkler, 177–203. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

9. Head Movement

Medeiros, David P. 2018. Universal Grammar as a Universal Parser. *Frontiers in Psychology* 9:155.

Information for students on other programmes and Affiliate/intercollegiate students:

If you want to take this module, you should select it on Portico as usual. Any general queries about taking the module can be addressed to Alexa Richardson: enquiries-linguistics@pals.ucl.ac.uk.

2. Teaching**Teaching methods and tutorial/lab arrangements**

2 classes per week:

Wednesdays 11:00-13:00 (B07). This class will take the form of a lecture, but time will be reserved for class discussion.

Fridays 9:00-11:00 (B01). Before reading week, this class will be used for lectures; after reading week, it will be used for discussion, planning and presentation of student projects

Communication

The easiest way of contacting me is by email (see above). However, I would encourage you to use the Moodle discussion forum if you have a question or point concerning the material discussed in classes or readings. This will enable other students to respond to your question/point and benefit from the discussion.

Workload

Classes: 3-4 hours per week

Reading: approximately 4 hours per week

Core texts

Although the course material will primarily be based on the readings listed in the week-by-week summary above, I would recommend using a textbook (e.g., Haegeman's 1994 book *An Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*) to refresh your memory of basic concepts.

Libraries and other resources**Additional information****Recording**

Lectures for this module are recorded via the UCL Lecturecast system, and a link to recordings will be made available via the Moodle page for this module. Please note that recordings can fail for a number of reasons.

3. Assessment*Level 4/5/6 undergraduate*

Mode of assessment	Weight	Format
Exam (include duration)		
Coursework (include word count)	100% (max 3000 words)	Essay
(Add more if needed)		
(Add more if needed)		
<i>Other assessment information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 words excluding footnotes, example sentences, definitions, direct citations and references • Due by 18 February 2019 • Submission via Moodle 	

Level 7 postgraduate

Mode of assessment	Weight	Format
Exam		
Coursework	100% (max 3000 words)	Essay
(Add more if needed)		

(Add more if needed)		
<i>Other assessment information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 words excluding footnotes, example sentences, definitions, direct citations and references • Due by 18 February 2019 • Submission via Moodle 	

4. Types of feedback

Types of feedback students on this module can expect to receive	This type of feedback is provided (X)
Generic tutor feedback	
Oral feedback is given to the whole class (eg this may be about coursework, an in-class or online task)	X
Electronic feedback to the whole group (eg see oral feedback above)	
Printed feedback to the whole group (eg answers to an exercise done in class, feedback relating to general performance on coursework or a task etc)	
Coverage of topics in class which have been raised by members of the class (eg in areas where students ask for clarification/elaboration, these topics are addressed in class)	
Electronic responses to the whole group via the VLE or via email (eg sending replies to individual queries to the whole group)	
<i>Other generic tutor feedback (please give details)</i>	
Automated feedback	
Tests / quizzes within VLE These are tests which do not count towards the module mark, but serve to inform students of how well they are understanding materials taught.	
Personal Response Systems used within class (eg to test that students understand a concept, to survey which topics students would like elaborated)	
<i>Other automated feedback (please give details)</i>	
Specific, targeted tutor feedback	
Oral responses within class (eg demonstrators talking to students in lab, stats and computing classes)	X
Oral responses outside class (eg students are invited to telephone or meet with module staff with individual queries regarding topics taught)	X
Electronic responses to queries from individual students are provided (as above)	
Summative comments on coursework (eg handwritten feedback at the end of a written assessment which counts towards the module mark)	
On-script comments in the body of individual summative coursework	X
Indication of achievement against set marking criteria (eg for an individual essay or a lab report)	
Feedback using a standard feedback form (eg essay feedback form or lab marking forms)	
Oral feedback on coursework talking to individual students about their coursework on the phone or in person, this could be summative points or specific comments on parts of the essay / lab report / project	
Electronic feedback on coursework This could be via email or on a VLE (eg using Gradebook on Moodle)	
<i>Other specific, targeted tutor feedback (please give details)</i>	
Feedback from people other than module staff	
Peer feedback: fellow students commenting on/marking each other's work, or working together on a task (eg group work providing students with feedback on their ideas/understanding)	
Self-feedback (eg students evaluating their own coursework, worksheet answers, etc)	
Feedback from seminar tutors Students may receive feedback on their understanding of topics/answers to queries/feedback on coursework from their tutor (eg poster, Research Project presentations etc)	
<i>Other feedback from those not teaching module (please give details)</i>	
Feedback related to examinations	
A mock examination is given to help students prepare for the final exam	

Marks for the previous year provided online , with a breakdown of marks for individual questions	
Samples of real student work , such as coursework, exam essays, and projects from previous students on the module.	
<i>Other exam-related feedback (please give details)</i>	

5. Specific transferable skills (categorised into skill areas)

Transferable students on this module can expect to develop	
Academic	
Learning Actively - Able to approach learning as an active agent, taking responsibility for the process and outcomes	X
Analysing Data - Able to filter and organise information to develop an argument and work toward a conclusion, applying numerical analysis where appropriate	X
Thinking Critically - Able to consider claims made against the evidence available and to develop one's own view systematically	X
Using Sources - Able to locate and use appropriate books, journals, websites and other sources to gather relevant data	X
Solving Problems - Able to use systematic approaches to overcome difficulties in producing a desired outcome	X
Managing Projects - Able to plan a coordinated set of tasks and enact over time to produce a substantial result	X
Self-management	
Reflecting on Learning - Able to review dispassionately one's approaches to learning and the outcomes and progressively improve the process.	X
Managing Time - Able to prioritise tasks and commitments to achieve optimum results in a designated timeframe	X
Being Creative / Innovative - Able to generate and apply original approaches to tasks and problems and produce improved outcomes	X
Assessing Oneself - Able to identify one's own strengths, weaknesses, progress made and action needed to improve effectiveness	X
Being Independent - Able to work at own initiative with minimal supervision, taking responsibility for action and outcomes	X
Managing Resources - Able to allocate and conserve funds and other resources on a day to day basis and to support projects	
Communication	
Writing - Able to communicate in textual forms (essays, reports, journal entries, web pages etc.) in an appropriate style with a clear narrative flow	X
Listening - Able to hear and appreciate the content, background and purpose of what someone else is communicating to you	X
Using Information Technology - Able to use digital technology for managing information and to mediate communication for learning and other purposes	
Presenting - Able to speak to an audience, using visual aids as appropriate and respond to questions	X
Communicating globally - Able to understand and manage factors affecting communication across cultures, including learning other languages	
Planning and making decisions - Able to identify steps needed to work towards goals and communicate them, including means of monitoring progress	X
Working with others	
Working in teams - Able to co-operate with others, to contribute your strengths and learn from theirs with a common purpose	X
Negotiating - Able to respect the needs and interests of others when they differ from your own and to find common ground	
Leading - Able to galvanise a team into cooperative action, to manage, guide or facilitate a group to maximise success	
Understanding others - Able to recognise the variety of ways in which people can think and approach tasks, adjusting your own to suit	
Assessing self and peers - Able to assess your own performance objectively and to give and receive constructive feedback with others	

Managing change - Able to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain focus on the group's declared goals

Other transferable skills developed in this module

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