



PLIN0053: Interfaces in Syntax

2021/22 Module information sheet

Lecturer

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Backup tutor

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Module description

This course deals with one or more topics that involve the interface between the syntax and a syntax-external system. The latter could be the interpretive system, the phonology, or the parser. The exact contents of the course change from year to year, to reflect developments in the field and the lecturer's own research. However, the course will always involve the reading of recent research papers and class presentations by students.

This year, the course concentrates on the interface between grammar and discourse within the cross-linguistic perspective. We will see that the same discourse interpretation is often encoded differently across languages. That is, languages use distinct formal tools (prosodic, syntactic or morphosyntactic) for the same interpretive purpose. The aim of this course is to determine what regulates this choice. We will start by looking at basic notions that operate at the discourse interface, i.e., the so-called information-structural notions, and the different means of encoding these notions cross-linguistically. We will see that the choice of linguistic tool is not coincidental but regulated by independent morpho-phonological properties of a given language. To account for this, various theoretical approaches to information-structural encoding, which make rather distinct predictions about the overall organization of the language faculty, will be presented and critically evaluated. About half our time, or a little more, will be devoted to lectures; the remaining time will be used for group work and presentations.

Prerequisites: Term 1 of PLIN0047 (or equivalent)

Timetable available at

[https://timetable.ucl.ac.uk/tt/moduleTimet.do?firstReq=Y&moduleId=PLIN0053&acadYear
F1=N](https://timetable.ucl.ac.uk/tt/moduleTimet.do?firstReq=Y&moduleId=PLIN0053&acadYear=F1=N)

Teaching methods and backup arrangements

- Students prepare for class by reading assigned papers, watching recorded lectures, and posting questions related to the reading and the lecture materials in the Hot Questions Task on Moodle or in the Moodle forum.
- Students attend one in-person (circumstances permitting) weekly tutorial on Wednesday. The tutorial will consist of a Q&A session addressing the questions posted in the Hot Questions Task or in the Moodle forum, or brought directly to the session, followed by group work on research projects investigating a particular interface phenomenon in a specific language or a set of languages. Students will work in groups, and each group will have the opportunity to present their findings and receive feedback on their work on three occasions.
- In addition to the tutorials on Wednesday, you will have to arrange meetings with your research group to discuss the readings and work on the presentations.

Consistent participation in all module components is obligatory.

Communication

Your main tool for communicating with me should be the Moodle forum. This will enable everybody to see both your question and my answer and to join in the conversation. If your question is of a private nature or otherwise inappropriate for the Moodle forum, please send me an email: e.titov@ucl.ac.uk

Workload

Lectures and backups: 3-4 hours per week.

Reading, revision and research group meetings : 5-7 hours per week.

Online resources

Moodle page available at: TBC

Core texts

It would be useful to keep a good textbook handy for revision of important concepts (in particular, those that you encountered in PLIN0047 in Term 1). Some recommended textbooks:

Carnie, Andrew (2002). *Syntax: a generative introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Haegeman, Liliane (1994). *An introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Haegeman, Liliane (2006). *Thinking syntactically*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Ouhalla, Jamal (1999). *Introducing transformational grammar*. London: Arnold.

Radford, Andrew (2004). *English syntax: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Other readings will be set throughout the course, but teaching will essentially be based on the ideas introduced in:

Bobaljik, Jonathan. 2008. Where's phi? Agreement as a post-syntactic operation. In Daniel Harbour, David Adger & Susana Béjar (eds.), *Phi-Theory: Phi features across interfaces and modules*, 295-328. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Büring, Daniel. 2003. On D-Trees, Beans and B-Accents. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 26(5), 511–545.
- Jackendoff, Ray. 1974. *Semantic Interpretation in Generative Grammar*. MIT Press.
- Jasinskaja, Katja & Radek Šimík. Slavonic free word order. To appear in Slavonic free word order. In Jan Fellerer and Neil Bermel (eds.) *The Oxford Guide to Slavonic languages*. Oxford University Press.
- Neeleman, Ad and Elena Titov. 2009. Focus, Contrast, and Stress in Russian. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 40 (3), 514-524.
- Neeleman, Ad, Elena Titov, Hans van de Koot, & Reiko Vermeulen. (2009). A Syntactic Typology of Topic, Focus and Contrast. In J. Van Craenenbroeck (Ed.), *Alternatives to Cartography*(pp. 15-52). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Neeleman, Ad & Reiko Vermeulen. 2012. The Syntactic Expression of Information Structure' in Neeleman, Ad & Reiko Vermeulen (eds.) *The Syntax of Topic, Focus, and Contrast*, 1–38DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614511458.1>
- Reinhart, Tanya. 1995. Interface Strategies. *OTS Working Papers in Linguistics*. Section III 'Focus -The PF interface' and Neeleman, Ad and Hans van de Koot. 2015. Word Order and Information Structure. In Caroline Féry and Shinichiro Ishihara (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Information Structure*, OUP. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199642670.013.20
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In *Elements of grammar*, ed. L. Haegeman, 281–337. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Titov, Elena. 2013a. Scrambling and interfaces. *Interdisciplinary Studies on Information Structure*. Vol. 17. Information Structure: Empirical Perspectives on Theory. Universitätsverlag Potsdam, 33–55.
- Titov, Elena. 2013b. Do contrastive topics exist? *Journal of Linguistics* 49(2), 413–454.
- Titov, E. 2017. The canonical order of Russian objects. *Linguistic Inquiry* 48.3:427–457.
- Titov, Elena. 2019. Morphosyntactic encoding of information structure in Akan. *Glossa: A Journal of General Linguistics*, 4(1), 27. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.576>
- Titov, Elena. 2020. Optionality of movement. *Syntax*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/synt.12202>
- Titov, Elena. 2021. Syntactic parameters: The case of IS-conditioned argument reordering. Presentation at CamCos 9 New *Where is the variation: syntax or PF?*. University of Cambridge, Anglia Ruskin University and Newcastle University. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zQYgZGhj3OGKbLc2YF9iyblii0xb2Nw_/view
- Truckenbrodt, Hubert. 2012. An analysis of prosodic F-effects in interrogatives: Prosody, syntax and semantics. *Lingua* 124, 131–175. (This paper discusses the Stress-XP and the NSR-I rules as well as post focal pitch compression.)

Libraries and other resources

Where possible, all reading will be made available via the Moodle Reading List.

Assessment

Please refer to the 'Assessment tab' on the module Moodle page for assessments submission dates.

Mode of Assessment	Level	Weight	Format
Coursework	Level 7 PG	100%	Take home exam

Feedback

See below for information on how feedback will be provided.

Transferable skills

See below for information on the transferable skills you can acquire by studying this module.

Feedback Mechanisms

Types of Feedback (categorised into feedback areas) For those responses you tick, further details may be provided in the relevant box below (optional)	This type of feedback is provided for this module (✓ all that apply)
GENERIC TUTOR FEEDBACK	
Oral feedback is given to the whole class (e.g. this may be about coursework or in-class tasks). <u>Further details:</u> Oral feedback will be provided in the Wednesday tutorials.	<u>x</u>
Electronic feedback to the whole group <u>Further details:</u> Electronic feedback to the whole group will be provided when an if necessary via the Moodle forum and in response to questions posted on the Moodle forum.	<u>x</u>
Printed feedback to the whole group (e.g. 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 (e.g. in areas where students ask for clarification/elaboration, these topics are addressed in class).	<u>x</u>
Electronic responses to the whole group via the VLE or via email (e.g. sending replies to individual queries to the whole group) <u>Further details:</u> The preferred method of communication for this class is the Moodle forum. All discussion that, for one reason or another, did not or could not happen in the tutorials will be continued here.	<u>x</u>
Other generic tutor feedback (please give details)	
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. <u>Further details:</u> Weekly quizzes will be available on Moodle.	<u>x</u>
Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) used within class (e.g. to test that students understand a concept, to survey which topics students would like elaborated)	
Other automated feedback (please give details)	
SPECIFIC, TARGETED TUTOR/DEMONSTRATOR FEEDBACK	
Oral responses within class (e.g. demonstrators talking to students in lab, stats and computing classes).	

Oral responses outside class (e.g. students are invited to telephone or meet with module staff with individual queries regarding topics taught). <u>Further details:</u> To arrange a meeting email: e.titov@ucl.ac.uk	<u>x</u>
Electronic responses to queries from individual students are provided (as above)	<u>x</u>
Summative comments on coursework (e.g. 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	
Indication of achievement against set marking criteria (e.g. for an individual essay or a lab report)	
Feedback using a standard feedback form (e.g. 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 (e.g. using Gradebook on Moodle)	
Other specific, targeted tutor feedback (please give details)	
FEEDBACK FROM PEOPLE OTHER THAN MODULE STAFF	
Peer feedback Fellow students commenting on/marking each other's work, or working together on a task (e.g. group work providing students with feedback on their ideas/understanding). <u>Further details:</u> Students will work in groups to prepare three presentations throughout the course. Students are encouraged to provide feedback on other groups' presentations.	<u>x</u>
Self-feedback (e.g. students evaluating their own coursework, worksheet answers, etc.)	
Feedback from seminar/year tutors Students may receive feedback on their understanding of topics/answers to queries/feedback on coursework from their tutor (e.g. 1105 poster, Research Project presentations etc.)	
Other feedback from those not teaching module (please give details)	
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 (where relevant). NB Marks will be anonymous.	
Samples of real student work provided , such as coursework, exam essays, and projects from previous students on the module. NB for exam essays these will be anonymous, for coursework and projects they may be cited with the students' consent.	
Other exam-related feedback (please give details)	

Please note that the categories of feedback and specific examples within categories were adapted from ideas on the HE Academy website at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/new-to-teaching/HEA-Feedback-Toolkit/what-are-the-various-forms-that-feedback-can-take> (July 2013).

UCL Personal and Professional Development Framework: Transferable Skills

Specific transferable skills (categorised into skill areas)	Skill developed in module? (✓ all that apply)
ACADEMIC	
Learning Actively - Able to approach learning as an active agent, taking responsibility for the process and outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analysing Data - Able to filter and organise information to develop an argument and work toward a conclusion, applying numerical analysis where appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Thinking Critically - Able to consider claims made against the evidence available and to develop one's own view systematically	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Using Sources - Able to locate and use appropriate books, journals, websites and other sources to gather relevant data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Solving Problems - Able to use systematic approaches to overcome difficulties in producing a desired outcome	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Managing Projects - Able to plan a coordinated set of tasks and enact over time to produce a substantial result	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SELF-MANAGEMENT	
Reflecting on Learning - Able to review dispassionately one's approaches to learning and the outcomes and progressively improve the process.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Managing Time - Able to prioritise tasks and commitments to achieve optimum results in a designated timeframe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Being Creative / Innovative - Able to generate and apply original approaches to tasks and problems and produce improved outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assessing Oneself - Able to identify one's own strengths, weaknesses, progress made and action needed to improve effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Being Independent - Able to work at own initiative with minimal supervision, taking responsibility for action and outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Managing Resources - Able to allocate and conserve funds and other resources on a day to day basis and to support projects	
COMMUNICATING	
Writing - Able to communicate in textual forms (essays, reports, journal entries, web pages etc.) in an appropriate style with a clear narrative flow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Listening - Able to hear and appreciate the content, background and purpose of what someone else is communicating to you	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Using Information Technology - Able to use digital technology for managing information and to mediate communication for learning and other purposes	<u>x</u>
Presenting - Able to speak to an audience, using visual aids as appropriate and respond to questions	<u>x</u>
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	<u>x</u>
WORKING WITH OTHERS	
Working in teams - Able to co-operate with others, to contribute your strengths and learn from theirs with a common purpose	<u>x</u>
Negotiating - Able to respect the needs and interests of others when they differ from your own and to find common ground	<u>x</u>
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	<u>x</u>
Assessing self and peers - Able to assess your own performance objectively and to give and receive constructive feedback with others	<u>x</u>
Managing change - Able to adapt to changing circumstances and maintain focus on the group's declared goals	
OTHER TRANSFERABLE SKILLS DEVELOPED BY THIS MODULE (please give details)	

Please note that the categories and skills listed here were taken from the *Personal and Professional Development Framework* provided online by the UCL Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ppd/resources/framework> (July 2013).