Linguistics 5331 - 001: Advanced Formal Syntax

Spring 2009

GENERAL INFORMATION:

  Instructor: Joey Sabbagh (Hammond Hall 407)
  Email : sabbagh@mit.edu
  Class Time: T, Th 9:30-10:50
  Class Location: Trimble Hall 218
  Office Hours: Thursday 1-2 and Friday 2-3

COURSE OVERVIEW[1]:

This course is a continuation of Linguistics 5330 (Formal Syntax). The first half of this course will focus on the apparent unbounded nature of $\bar{\text{A}}$ (A-bar)-movement rules such as wh-movement, topicalization, etc. The notion that such rules are unbounded relates to the observation that the moved element may be separated from its base position over an apparently infinite distance as in, e.g., *Who did Sally say that she thinks Fred claimed that Suzy loves ___?*. We will explore this property in some detail, devoting much time to the question of whether such examples involve truly unbounded movement or whether whether this is simply apparent and unbounded movement instead reduces to a series of more local, 'successive-cyclic', movements. Evidence from English and a variety of other languages (e.g., Irish, Chamorro) will be brought to bear on this question. Central to the discussion will be an investigation of syntactic 'islands'—syntactic configurations (e.g., relative clauses, coordinate structures) from which unbounded movement is systematically prohibited.

The second half of this course will focus on the syntax of anaphora. We will investigate the role of both syntax and semantics in determining admissible coreference relationships between pronouns and their antecedents. We will begin with the three Binding Principles of Chomsky (1981) (Principle A, B, and C), but attempt to go somewhat beyond these principles in an attempt to characterize some of the more intricate facts relating to the architecture of anaphora. Once we have developed a relatively good understanding of this, we will round out this section by investigating the phenomenon of VP-ellipsis.

This course will differ from Linguistics 5330 (Formal Syntax) in that the focus will be on original research instead of problem sets and on gaining familiarity with the primary literature.

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[1]Ambitious version.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1-2 problem sets.

- 3 squibs (see below).

- A revised and expanded version of one of your squibs.

- A final term-paper based on this squib.

READINGS:[2]

Course readings can be downloaded in pdf form from: http://ling.uta.edu/ joey/Teaching.html. The password for accessing the readings will be given out in class.

- *Chomsky, Noam and Howard Lasnik. 1995. 'The theory of Principles and Parameters'. In *The Minimalist Program*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

- McCloskey, James. 2001. 'Questions and Questioning in a Local English,' in *Crosslinguistic Research in Syntax and Semantics: Negation, Tense, and Clausal Architecture*, Raffaella Zanuttini, Hctor Campos, Elena Herburger, Paul H. Portner, eds., Georgetown University Press: 87-126.

- *Engdahl, Elisabet. 1983. 'Parasitic Gaps', *Linguistics and Philosophy*, Vol. 6, 5-34.

- Bhatt, Rajesh. 2002. 'The raising analysis of relative clauses: Evidence from adjectival modification'. *Natural Language Semantics*, Vol. 10. (Read pp. 43-52)

- Ross, Haj. 1967. *Constraints on Variables in Syntax*. Ph.D. dissertation, MIT. (Chapter 4 of *Infinite Syntax!*, 1986, Alex Publishing Corporation, pp. 70-156.)

- *Chomsky, Noam. 1977. 'On Wh-movement'. In P. Cullicover, T. Wasow, and A. Akmajian (eds.), *Formal Syntax*, 71-132. New York: Academic Press.

- Bresnan, Joan. 1977. 'Variables in the theory of transformation part I: Bounded versus unbounded transformation', In P. Cullicover, T. Wasow, and A. Akmajian (eds.), *Formal Syntax*, 157-183. New York: Academic Press.

- *Chung, Sandra and James McCloskey. 1983. 'On the interpretation of certain island facts in GPSG', *Linguistic Inquiry*, Vol. 14, pp. 704-713

- McCloskey, James. 1990. 'Resumptive pronouns, Ā-binding and levels of representation in Irish. In Randal Hendrick (ed.), *The syntax of the modern Celtic languages*, Volume 23 of *Syntax and Semantics*, Academic Press (pp. 199-248).

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[2]Subject to changes (additions or subtractions) as we go along.

- *McCloskey, James. 'Resumption', in *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk, eds., Blackwell Publishing: 94-117.

- *Rizzi, Luigi. 1990. *Relativized Minimality*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. (Selected portions).

- Cinque, Guglielmo. *Types of Ā-Dependencies*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA (Chapter 1).

- Chung, Sandra 1994. 'Wh-agreement and "Referentiality" in Chamorro'. *Linguistic Inquiry*, Vol. 25:1, pp. 1-44.

- Merchant, Jason. 2001. *The syntax of silence: Sluicing, islands, and the theory of ellipsis*. Oxford University Press: Oxford. (Selected portions TBA)

- Fox, Danny and David Pesetsky. 2005. 'Cyclic linearization and Syntactic Structure'. *Theoretical Linguistics*, Vol. 31, pp. 1-45.

- Buring, Daniel. 2005. *Binding Theory*. Cambridge University Press. (Selected Chapters)

- *Huang, C.-T. James. 1993. 'Reconstruction and the structure of VP: Some theoretical consequences'. *Linguistic Inquiry*, Vol. 24, pp. 103-138

- Hankamer, Jorge and Ivan Sag. 1976. 'Deep and Surface anaphora' *Linguistic Inquiry* 7, 391-426.

- Johnson, Kyle. 2001. 'What VP-ellipsis can do, and what it can't, but not why'. In *The Handbook of Contemporary Syntactic Theory*, Mark Baltin and Chris Collins (eds.). Blackwell Publishers, pp, 439-479.

- Sag, Ivan. 1976. *Deletion and Logical Form*. PhD dissertation, MIT.

- Lobeck, Anne. 1995. *Ellipsis*. Oxford University Press. (Selected Portions)

- Goldberg, Lotus. 2005. *Verb-Stranding VP Ellipsis: A Cross-linguistic study*. PhD dissertation, McGill University. (Chapters 1-2/3)

SQUIBS:

A squib is a short paper (usually 3-10 pages) that presents original data that either problematizes or supports some theoretical proposal. A squib may, but is not required to propose an analysis, as long as the relevance to theoretical issues is made clear. Some good examples of squibs can be found in early volumes of *Linguistic Inquiry* (especially from the 70's), here are some.

- Perlmutter, David M. and John Robert Ross. 1970. 'Relative clauses with split antecedents', *Linguistic Inquiry*, Vol 1:2.

- Kimball, John and Judith Aissen. 1971. 'I think, you think, he think', *Linguistic Inquiry*, Vol. 2:2

There is also an online journal, *Snippets*, devoted entirely to the publication of squibs (The URL for this is: http://www.ledonline.it/snippets/).

Guidlines for Writing Your Squibs:

Your squib must be a minimum of 3 single spaced pages (or 5-6 pages double spaced), and each of your squibs must focus on a distinct topic/phenomenon. Though your squib may involve data from any language, please only use a language that you are familiar with and for which data can be easily acquired. If you use examples from a language other language, provide appropriate glosses and translations (please consult the style sheets of any major linguistics journal (e.g., *Linguistic Inquiry*, *Language*, etc.) if you are unsure about formatting issues).

IMPORTANT DATES:

Due dates for your squibs:

> Squib #1 — Due Friday, January 29.
> Squib #2 — Due Friday, February 5.
> Squib #3 — Due Friday, February 12.

Due date for revised squib: Tuesday, March 2.

Due date for final paper: Thursday, May 13.

No class on March 16 or March 18 (Spring Break).

IMPORTANT ACADEMIC and ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the course syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week.

Americans With Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

According to Department of Linguistics and TESOL policy, "unofficial" or "informal" requests for accommodations (i.e., those not recorded by the Office of Students with Disabilities) cannot be honored.

Academic Dishonesty: At The University of Texas at Arlington, academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. Students involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from UTA.

According the UT System Regents' Rules and Regulations, "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22).

While the Department of Linguistics and TESOL hopes to foster a sense of community in which students can enhance their educational experience by conferring with each other about the lectures, readings, and assignments, all work submitted must be the product of each student's own effort.

Students are expected to know and honor the standards of academic integrity followed by American universities; ignorance of these standards is not an excuse for committing an act of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism). If you have questions, please speak with your instructor, your academic advisor, or the department chair.

Please be advised that departmental policy requires instructors to formally file charges with the Office of Student Conduct, following procedures laid out for faculty there[3], as well as notify the department chair of the filing of the charges.

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for information and referrals.

Enrolling in / Withdrawing from this Course: Students are responsible for making all decisions regarding their enrollment status in UTA courses. Should you decide to withdraw from this course, you must either (1) drop via the internet through the MyMav system or (2) complete an official "add/drop" and file it in the Linguistics and TESOL department office. Any student who stops attending class and/or fails to complete assigned work will not be "automatically" dropped; in such cases, unless you officially withdraw, you will receive a grade of F. (Note: Students enrolled in graduate courses may not "replace" a grade; all grades are permanent.)

A student dropping his/her last (only) course cannot withdraw as above. Rather, s/he must go in person to the UTA Registrar's Office (Davis Hall, First Floor) and complete a request to resign from the university. THE LAST DAY TO DROP IS APRIL 2, 2010.

Auditors: The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. Students attending LING classes must be officially enrolled in those courses. Exception: Students who have already fulfilled a degree requirements and would like to sit in on a comparable course to prepare for their comprehensive / diagnostic examination may do so (with the permission of the professor).

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[3]http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/faculty.html