Syllabus: LING 5202
Syntactic Theory 2

University of Minnesota
Fall 2016

Course

LING 5202 Syntactic Theory 2

Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Bruininks Hall 117

Instructor

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Office hours: Tuesday 11:50 –12:50

Elliott Hall S313

Course description

This course is the second course in the grad-level Syntax sequence. In this course, we will critique the Government and Binding Theory developed in Syntactic Theory 1, and move towards the modern incarnation of Chomskyan generative syntax, known as the Minimalist Program. Topics that we will cover include phrase structure, agreement, case theory, control vs. raising, and A′-movement.

Workload and grade calculation

- Homeworks 30%

- Journals 20%

- Final Paper 50%:

    – Final Draft 25%

    – Proposal 5%

    – Rough Draft 10%

    – Presentation 10%

Your **letter grade** for the class will be assigned on the following scale.

A	93–100%	B	83–86%	C	73–76%	D	60–64%
A–	90-92%	B–	80-82%	C–	70-72%	F	0–59%
B+	87–89%	C+	77–79%	D+	65–69%		

Policies and other remarks

Final paper.   At the end of the semester you'll be asked to write a final paper examining one of the issues that we addressed in class. This paper should be 15–20 pages. You may either critically review the literature on some phenomenon in Minimalist syntax, investigate the syntax of some phenomenon in a language that you know using the Minimalist framework, or compare and contrast a GB and Minimalist analysis of some phenomenon.

I will ask that you turn in a proposal and a rough draft on days specified in the syllabus. The proposal due date is to force you to have started investigating some topic earlier in the semester, and the rough draft is intended as a way for me to give you feedback. I will also give you feedback on your writing style, formatting conventions, etc., in addition to the argument. By this point, you should be developing a "linguistics" writing style – numbered sections, properly formatted examples, concise introduction and conclusions, foreshadowed conclusions, etc. I will give a handout on recommendations for writing style, and provide a rubric for how I will grade the final papers in due time.

Presentation.   At the end of the semester, you will be asked to provide a presentation on your final paper. This shoud be approximately 20 minutes, plus 10 minutes for questions (the standard in linguistics conferences). You will be graded on conciseness, preciseness, and organization. You should also have a handout (preferred) or slides to accompany your talk. It's best to think of this as a "mini-conference", i.e., you should pitch your talk to an audience of professionals in syntax, but not necessarily presuppose fine-grained knowledge of the particular phenomenon or language under investigation. For instance, if you want to give an analysis of control structures in Assamese, you don't need to remind us what control is, but you should discuss the differences between the PRO theory of control and the movement theory of control, and tell us a bit about the relevant Assamese facts before providing your analysis.

Participation.   Participation and attendance are crucial. Although there is no participation grade or attendance grade, much of the material is not based on any textbook or any resource outside of class. For that reason, the lectures and the handouts are the definitive authority on the class material. Additionally, I expect that students come to class prepared to discuss the readings in

detail, when readings are assigned. Minimalist analyses sometimes rely a great deal on abstract reasoning, and for that reason it's crucial to see an analysis presented multiple times before it makes sense. I will post the handouts on the course website in case you miss a class, but it is your responsibility to understand it. If you need something clarified, your first course of action is to e-mail me, and your second course of action is to come to office hours.

Homework. There will be six homeworks in this class. You will have two weeks to complete each homework. Each homework will introduce a technical concept that we will then discuss in class. For that reason, it is imperative that you complete the homeworks on time. My official late policy is that you will lose a letter grade per day, i.e., if your homework is late but turned in on the same day, you will receive a B. If your homework is turned in the next day, then you will receive a C, etc. My unofficial late policy is **don't turn in homeworks late**. You won't win any favors by turning in something late. I will try to make the homeworks available before they are assigned, if you would prefer to get a head start on them.

At this stage, I am more interested in making sure that you can reason about the theory and apply it in new ways, and less interested in getting the "right" answer. On the cutting edge of science, there rarely is a clearly defined "right answer". For that reason, I will give you the option to redo assignments after I provide feedback on your first attempt. The revisions will be due one week after the original due date, e.g., Homework # 1's due date is 1/31, which means the optional revision will be due on 2/7. If you do a revision, your grade will be an average of these two scores, e.g., a 50% original grade and a 100% revision will win you a 75%.

Drawing Trees. At this stage, I expect that homeworks are turned in on-line in PDF format in Moodle. That means you will need to draw your trees electronically somehow. There are countless ways of doing this, and they depend on your word processor/document formatting package. Personally, I highly suggest that you learn to use LaTeX, as this comes with many tools (and accessible tutorials) for tree-drawing, but also tableaux drawing, example formatting, IPA, funny semantics-y characters, etc. Googling "Latex for Linguists" will give you many options, and it's definitely a skill that grad students in Linguistics should eventually become used to. Personally, I use the `forest` package (with `forest`) package for tree-drawing and the `linguex` package for example formatting. I can provide the template code that I use for formatting documents with examples if you would like.

Journal. You will be asked to write a journal entry on two different topics that we discuss in class. You will be asked to find and read a paper on that topic that we did not assign in class, and write a 2–3 page summary of their findings or argument. This is intended to get you a reading primary literature. There is no set due date for the journal entries. You may turn them in at any point during the semester. However, an efficient strategy might be to read papers that are relevant to your final paper. So, doing at least one journal entry before the proposal is highly recommended.

I highly recommend finding papers to write journal entries about from the following publications: *Linguistic Inquiry*, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, *Syntax*, *Glossa*, *Lingua*, and *Linguistics*. Additionally, there are some language group-specific journals that may be worthwhile.

For instance, in South Asian Linguistics, the *Journal of South Asian Languages* has some quality publications.

Textbooks. There is no official textbook for this course. The first unit of the class will draw heavily from mainstream Government & Binding, the second unit of the class will draw heavily from early-to-mid Minimalism, and the third unit will focus on applying Minimalist ideas. Liliane Haegeman's 1994 textbook *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory* is the definitive GB textbook and may be a useful reference for the first half of the semester, and Norbert Hornstein, Kleanthes Grohmann, and Jairo Nunes' (HGN) 2006 textbook *Understanding Minimalism* is the definitive early-to-mid Mininamlism textbook. The second unit of the course will draw heavily from HGN, so I recommend that you pick up a copy. If you expect to continue studying syntax, I **highly recommend** reading these books. Haegeman, HGN, and Noam Chomsky's (1995) *The Minimalist Program* are available in the lounge in Elliott Hall, but these three books are also available on Amazon. Additional class readings will be provided on a week-by-week basis.

Tentative Schedule:

This schedule is tentative. The readings are the required readings. Additional readings will be provided on the course website on a week-by-week basis.

Wk	Date	Topics	Readings	Notes
1	1/17	Intro/GB Review	Chomsky (1995), Ch. 1	HW 1
2	1/24	Intro/GB Review	Chomsky (1995), Ch. 1	
3	1/31	Intro/GB Review	Chomsky (1995), Ch. 1	HW 2
4	2/7	Intro to Minimalism	HGN (2006) Ch. 2	
5	2/14	D-Structure	HGN (2006) Ch. 3	HW 3
6	2/21	D-Structure	HGN (2006) Ch. 6	
7	2/28	S-Structure	HGN (2006) Ch. 4	HW 4
8	3/07	Movement	HGN (2006) Ch. 5, Ch. 9	Proposal Due
9	3/14	SPRING BREAK		YAYYY
10	3/21	Control as Movement?	Hornstein (1999)	HW 5
11	3/28	Linearization and Cyclicity	Fox & Pesetsky (2005)	
12	4/4	Agreement and Case	Bhatt (2005)	HW 6
13	4/11	Theta Roles? & Harley (2010)	Rough Draft Due	
14	4/18	Abstract vs. Morphological Case	Legate (2008)	
15	4/25	Spillover Region		
16	5/2	Presentations		

Bibliography

Bhatt, Rajesh. 2005. Long Distance Agreement in Hindi-Urdu. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 23, 757–807.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *Minimalist Program*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Fox, Danny, and David Pesetsky. 2005. Cyclic Linearization of Syntactic Structure. *Theoretical Linguistics* 31, 1–45.

Haegeman, Liliane. 1994. *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harley, Heidi. 2010. A Minimalist Approach to Argument Structure. In C. Boeckx (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, 426–447. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hornstein, Norbert. 1999. Movement as Control. *Linguistic Inquiry* 30(1), 69–96.

Hornstein, Norbert, Kleanthes Grohmann, and Jairo Nunes. 2006. *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Legate, Julie. 2008. Morphological and Abstract Case. *Linguistic Inquiry* 39(1), 55–101.