LT4241: TOPICS IN SYNTAX

Effective Term
Semester B 2022/23

Part I Course Overview

Course Title
Topics in Syntax

Subject Code
LT - Linguistics and Translation
Course Number
4241

Academic Unit
Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration
One Semester

Credit Units
3

Level
B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction
English

Medium of Assessment
English

Prerequisites
LT3209 Syntax

Precursors
LT3211 Semantics and LT3214 Phonology

Equivalent Courses
CTL4241 Topics in Syntax

Exclusive Courses
Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course serves as an introduction to the formal syntactic analysis in the Generative Grammar tradition, in particular the framework which has been well-established since the Government and Binding era. Our goal is to explore a theoretical

model that can explain and capture the complexity of natural language syntax in a general, uniform and elegant manner. Concepts to be discussed include categories and features, constituent structure, structural relations, the X-bar theory, thematic relations, argument structure, binding, raising and control, head movement and phrasal movement, among others. The linguistic data will mainly come from English, but the theory to be developed is applicable to every other human language.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Gain a solid understanding of various formal and functional properties of English syntax.		x	x	x
2	Develop critical thinking on the formal analyses of syntactic phenomena.		x	x	x
3	Obtain a general grasp of the current issues in the academic research of syntax.		x	x	x
4	Practically incorporate the knowledge in a particular theory into linguistically relevant activities.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

	TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Lectures will cover a broad range of topics in syntax. Specific topics for each class meeting will be properly designed and arranged by the course leader, based on the organization of the textbook. Lectures will be supplemented with handouts. Practice in analyzing data is provided through in-class exercises to familiarize students with theoretical concepts taught.	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hours

| 2 | Assignments (2 times) | Students will learn to analyze linguistic data and, in the process, master underlying concepts and theory by putting them to use. Problem sets will be given for students to discuss theoretical and practical consequences and to develop argumentation skills. | 1, 2, 3, 4 | |

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Assignments (2 times) These are datasets and questions for students to develop analytical and argumentation skills.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	
2	Midterm examination A midterm examination will be given to evaluate students' understanding of the concepts discussed	1, 2, 4	35	
3	Final paper This is a short research paper that involves observations and analyses on natural language syntax.	1, 2, 3, 4	35	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Assignments

Criterion

Demonstrate the ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate excellent ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate good ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrate adequate ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrate little, insufficient ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Failure (F)

Demonstrate virtually no ability to analyse and critically appreciate fundamental issues in syntactic theory.

Assessment Task

2. Midterm examination

Criterion

Demonstrate understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate excellent understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate good understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrate adequate understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrate little understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Failure (F)

Demonstrate virtually no understanding of the fundamental concepts and analytical tools in syntactic theory.

Assessment Task

3. Final paper

Criterion

Demonstrate ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate excellent ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate good ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrate adequate ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrate little ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Failure (F)

Demonstrate virtually no ability in academic writing and in analysing the chosen topic in syntax.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

phrase structure, parts of speech, syntactic category, empty category, thematic structure, verb class, thematic relation, control, raising, head movement, phrasal movement, binding, c-command

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Carnie, Andrew. 2007. Syntax: A generative introduction, 2nd Edition. Malden: Blackwell.
2	Lecture handouts

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Chao, Yuen-Ren. 1968. A Grammar of spoken Chinese. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
2	Haegeman, Liliane. 1994. Introduction to Government and Binding Theory. Oxford: Blackwell.
3	Huang, James C.-T., Audrey Y.-H. Li, and Yafei Li. 2009. The Syntax of Chinese. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4	Huang, C.-T. James, Y.-H. Audrey Li, and Andrew Simpson (eds). 2014. The Handbook of Chinese Linguistics. Wiley-Blackwell.
5	Li, Charles N. and Sandra Thompson. 1981. Mandarin Chinese: A functional reference grammar. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
6	Radford, Andrew. 2004. English syntax: An introduction. Cambridge University Press.
7	Sportiche, Dominique, Hilda Koopman, and Edward Stabler. 2014. An introduction tosyntactic analysis and theory. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
8	Sun, Chaofen. Chinese: A Linguistic Introduction. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.