

Challenging Grammar

ANL21003BA/AN2104OMA/AN1050MA

2-credit seminar

Spring 2024

Course Description

This course is concerned with syntactic theory and its primary goal is to provide students with the tools necessary to analyze various grammatical phenomena within the framework of Minimalism. Topics to be covered include categories and features, the Merge operation, Theta Theory, Case Theory and agreement. Although our main focus will be on the grammar of English, we will also look at data from other languages for cross-linguistic comparison. An important upshot of this course is that the students learn how to formulate a hypothesis and how to test the predictions of a hypothesis in linguistic theorizing.

Textbook

Koenenman, Olaf & Hedde Zeijlstra. 2017. *Introducing Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grading

The final grade will be based on a midterm test and an endterm test. Grades on the midterm test will carry a weight of 40% of the final grade, whereas grades on the endterm test will carry a weight of 60%. An alternative to the midterm test is a presentation about a topic of your choice at this semester's TDK event (more info about this event will follow soon). Please consult with me before February 21 if you are interested in this option.

Attendance

No more than three absences are allowed, illness included.

Weekly Syllabus

Week#	Class content	Reading assignments
Week 1 Feb. 14	The Language Machine	
Week 2 Feb. 21	Categories and Features	pp. 1-29
Week 3 Feb. 28	Merge	pp. 30-53
Week 4 Mar. 6	Theta Theory 1	pp. 54-77

Week 5 Mar. 13	Theta Theory 2	
Week 6 Mar. 20	Review	
Week 7 Mar. 27	Case Theory 1	pp. 78-109
Week 8	<i>Spring break</i>	
Week 9 Apr. 10	Midterm Test (60 mins)	
Week 10 Apr. 17	Case Theory 2	
Week 11 Apr. 24	Agreement and Uninterpretable Features 1	pp. 110-137
Week 12	<i>No class meeting on May 1</i>	
Week 13 May 8	Agreement and Uninterpretable Features 2 Review	
Week 14 May 15	Endterm Test (90 mins)	

Place and Time

Wednesday 10.00 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. (Room 106)

Contact

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Office hours: Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Friday 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.