

AM3a — Topics in syntactic and semantic variation

1 Course description

We are going to look at a variety of domains where different languages exhibit different syntactic and semantic properties. For each topic, there will be two goals: first, to determine if the kinds of variation we see are systematic and predictable; and second, to determine to what extent they can be derived from other things we know about either the relevant languages or linguistic theory in general.

2 Practical information

Instructor	Dr. Luis Vicente (vicente@uni-potsdam.de)						
Office	Golm, Haus 14, Raum 0.09						
Office hours	Wednesdays 09:00–12:00, or by email appointment						
Time and location	Tuesdays 12:00–14:00; Campus Golm, 27.1.01						
Course website	luisvicente.net/coursematerials/ss16-am3a (some materials are password-protected; ask me for the password)						
Language policy	Lectures will happen in English, as all the relevant literature is also in English. Paper summaries and the final paper, you can use either German or English.						
Work submission	All work needs to be submitted to me by email (only .pdf or .txt files). Please include the course module and your name in the Subject field.						
Late submission	I will subtract 10% of the grade for each day you are late.						
Grading	Participation	10%	(Ask questions! Make comments!)				
	Paper summaries	30%	(5, worth 6% each)				
	Final paper	60%					
		100%					
Conversion	Percentage	<50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75
	UP grade	5.0	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7
	Percentage	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-100	
	UP grade	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	

3 Paper summaries

On weeks 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15, I will assign a medium-length (20–30 pages) paper or book chapter about a topic we've been discussing in class. You need to write a brief summary and submit it before the starting time of the following class (for the last one, this means 11:59 on Tuesday July 26). You have to follow these guidelines.

- **Format:** 12pt font, single-spaced, 25mm margins on all sides. Three pages absolute maximum, but you can write less than that if you think it is sufficient.
- **Examples and references:** You need to include all the examples you think are relevant; you only need to include a bibliography list if you are citing references not cited by the paper.
- **What to write about:** you need to say something cogent about all of the following:
 - Why is the author writing this paper? What is the main problem that needs to be solved, or the central phenomenon that needs to be understood?
 - What are the crucial data that need to be accounted for?
 - What is the author's proposal to account for these data?
 - What is the be argument (or arguments) that the author can provide for his/her proposal?
 - (optional, if you have space left) your own thoughts and criticisms on the paper. Can you think of other languages with similar properties? Can you think of ways of extending the analysis to other data? Do you think that there is something wrong or missing in the argumentation?
- **What I'm looking for:** an ability to (i) read a complex piece of scientific writing; (ii) identify the essential data and arguments; and (iii) summarize them in a clear and concise way.

4 Final paper

A longer paper in which you research a topic of your own choice in more detail. You should start thinking about a topic early in the course; ask me for help if you haven't found one by week 7. The following rules apply:

- **Format:** 10 to 15 single-spaced pages (excluding references and title page), 25mm margins all around, 12pt font. Don't try to cheat with a large font, large margins, or double-spacing: I will notice it and I won't like it.
- Paper deadline: Sunday, September 4 at 23:59.

5 Recommended background reading

There is no official textbook for this course. If you think you are missing some background, you should consult one of the following textbooks. Ask me for help if you don't know which one you should read.

- Carnie, Andrew. 2006. *Syntax: a generative introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Heim, Irene, and Angelika Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Johnson, Kyle. 2007. *Introduction to Transformational Grammar*. Ms., University of Massachusetts, Amherst (people.umass.edu/kbj/homepage/Content/601_lectures.pdf).
- Nunes, Jairo, Norbert Hornstein, and Kleantes Grohmann. 2006. *Understanding minimalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sag, Ivan, Tom Wasow, and Emily Bender. 2003. *Syntactic Theory: an Introduction*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

6 Selected course readings

- Abels, Klaus, and Ad Neeleman. 2012. Linear asymmetries and the LCA. *Syntax* 15:25–74.
- Abney, Paul. 1987. The English Noun Phrase in its sentential aspect. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.
- Baker, Mark. 2008. The macroparameter in a microparametric world. In Biberauer and Roberts (eds.) *The limits of syntactic variation*, 351–374. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bošković Željko. 2008. What will you have, DP or NP? *Proceedings of NELS* 37, 101–114. Amherst: GLSA.
- Bošković, Željko, and Jon Gajewski. 2011. Semantic correlates of the DP/NP parameter. *Proceedings of NELS* 39, 121–134. Amherst: GLSA.

- Cinque, Guglielmo. 2005. Deriving Greenberg's Universal 20 and its exceptions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36:315–332.
- van Craenenbroeck, Jeroen. 2014. The signal and the noise in Dutch verb clusters. Ms., KU Leuven/CRISP.
- Deal, Amy Rose. 2011. Modals without scales. *Language* 87:559–585.
- Deal, Amy Rose. 2015. Ergativity. In Alexiadou and Kiss (eds.) *Syntax: theory and analysis*, 654–707. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 1994. *Ergativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- É. Kiss, Katalin, and Henk van Riemsdijk. 2004. *Verb clusters: a study of Hungarian, German, and Dutch*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Etxeberria, Urtzi. 2005. Quantification and domain restriction in Basque. Doctoral dissertation, University of the Basque Country.
- von Stechow, Kai. 1994. Restrictions on quantifier domains. Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- von Stechow, Kai, and Lisa Matthewson. 2008. Universals in semantics. *The Linguistic Review* 25:139–201.
- Matthewson, Lisa. 1998. *Determiner systems and quantificational strategies*. The Hague: Holland Academic Graphics.
- McKenzie, Andrew. 2011. The role of contextual restriction in reference tracking. Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Ortiz de Urbina, Jon. 1999. Force phrases, focus phrases, and left heads in Basque. In Franco, Landa, and Martin (eds.) *Grammatical analyses in Basque and Romance linguistics*, 179–194. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Richards, Norvin. 2014. Contiguity theory. Ms., MIT.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In Haegeman (ed.) *Elements of grammar*, 281–337. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Salzmann, Martin. 2005. Resumptive prolepsis. Doctoral dissertation, Leiden University.
- Ura, Hiroyuki. 2000. *Checking theory and grammatical functions in Universal Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- van Urk, Coppe. 2015. A uniform syntax for phrasal movement. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.
- de Vries, Mark. 2002. The syntax of relativization. Doctoral dissertation, University of Amsterdam.

7 Tentative schedule

This schedule is “tentative” because you, as a group, can always decide that you are particularly interested in some specific topic (including one that doesn’t appear here) and ask me to spend one or two sessions talking about it instead of something else.

Date	Topic	Reading
13.04	General introduction: universals and variation in syntax and semantics	Baker 2008; von Stechow and Matthewson 2008
19.04	Variation in the nominal domain (I): order of constituents	Cinque 2005; Abels and Neeleman 2012
26.04	Variation in the nominal domain (II): D-less and D-ful languages Assignment of paper 1	Abney 1987; Bošković 2008; Bošković and Gajewski 2011
03.05	Variation in the nominal domain (III): quantifiers and domain restriction Summary of paper 1 due	von Stechow 1994; Matthewson 1998; Etxeberria 2004;
10.05	Variation in the nominal domain (IV): varieties of relative clauses	de Vries 2002; Salzmann 2005
17.05	Variation in the verbal domain (I): synthetic and analytic verbs Assignment of paper 2	Hale and Keyser 1993; Meegerdoornik 2002
24.05	Variation in the verbal domain (II): accusative and ergative languages Summary of paper 2 due	Dixon 1994, Deal 2015.
31.05	Variation in the verbal domain (III): verb clusters	É. Kiss and van Riemsdijk 2004, van Craenenbroeck 2014
07.06	Variation in the verbal domain (IV): modality and modal systems Assignment of paper 3	Deal 2011.
14.06	Variation in the C domain (I): complementizer positions Summary of paper 3 due	Rizzi 1997; Ortiz de Urbina 2003
21.06	Variation in the C domain (II): size of embedded clauses	Landau 2004
28.06	Variation in the C domain (III): switch reference systems Assignment of paper 4	McKenzie 2011
05.07	Variation in movement (I): raising, super-raising, and hyper-raising Summary of paper 4 due	Ura 2000
12.07	Variation in movement (II): A vs. A-bar movement	van Urk 2015
19.07	Variation in movement (III): Covert vs. overt movement Assignment of paper 5	Richards 2014
<i>end of classes</i>		
23.07	Summary of paper 5 due	
04.09	Final paper due	