

LING 300: Syntax (Studies in Grammar)

2014w, Term 1

Instructor: Rose-Marie Déchaine

Teaching Assistant: Sihwei Chen

General Course Information

▪ Course Description

Syntax is the branch of linguistics that deals with the structure of sentences. Syntax, understood as the (implicit) knowledge that a speaker has of the sentence structure of their language, is a core component of the human language faculty, and interfaces with all aspects of grammar, and ultimately human cognition. Words are the building blocks of syntax; consequently, syntax and word-level processes (*morphology*) go hand-in-hand. Syntax is shaped by, and shapes, *semantics*: lexical meaning constrains syntactic structure, and syntactic structure in turn constrains rules of semantic composition. Syntax also shapes *phonology*, as the output of syntax is the input for rules of phonological interpretation. We will therefore be concerned with: (i) what the study of sentence structure reveals about the organization of the grammar (understood as a form of cognition); (ii) how syntax interfaces with other components of the grammar (especially, phonology, morphology, and semantics).

▪ Goals and objectives

This course has two primary learning outcomes:

- 1. Use **hypothesis-testing** to identify syntactic relations, with a focus on:
 - **Detecting** syntactic relations (“What’s out there?”)
 - Categories*: How do linguists detect the *syntactic atoms* of language?
 - Constituents*: How do linguists detect the *structure* of a sentence?
 - Selection*: How do linguists detect the *dependency relations* that hold between constituents?
 - **Modeling** syntactic relations (“How do linguists model what’s out there?”)
 - Storage*: How is information about syntactic atoms encapsulated in the *lexicon*?
 - Computation*: How are syntactic atoms assembled into complex units via *recursive structure-building*?
 - Representation*: How do syntactic atoms generate *labelled trees*?
- 2. Contribute to **knowledge dissemination** by collaboratively developing a Wikipedia article in one of the following four themes:
 - Theme A: Conceptual Foundations**
Bootstrapping; Grammaticality; Locality; Performance
 - Theme B: Nominal Syntax**
Adjectival noun; Inalienable possession; Equative; Nominal
 - Theme C: Verbal Syntax**
Lexical semantics; Head parameter; Subject parameter; Theta criterion
 - Theme D: Binding Theory**
Bound variable pronoun; Logical Form; Logophoricity; PRO

• Schedule

Tuesday/Thursday, 9.30-11.00am, Frederic Lasserre (LASR) 104, 6333 Memorial Road

• **Course requirements**

Prerequisite: LING 201 (Linguistic Theory & Analysis II)

Requirements: Students are required to attend all scheduled classes, participate in class discussions, and complete course activities. The latter are centered around mastery of foundational content (50% of the grade) and contribution to knowledge dissemination in the form of a Wikipedia article (50% of the grade).

• **Instructor contact information: Rose-Marie Déchaine**

- Office hours: Thursday, 11.15-12.00 Brock Hall Annex 2354 (or by appointment)
- Weekly Syntax Tutorial: Tuesday, 3.00-4.00pm, location TBA
- Email: via course website (if that fails, try dechaine@mail.ubc.ca)
- Phone: 604-822-6466 (message)
- Office: 2613 West Mall, Totem Field Studios (TFS), Room 223

• **TA contact information: Sihwei Chen**

- Weekly Syntax Tutorial: Thursday, 1.00-2.00pm, location TBA
- Email: via course website (if that fails, try sw.chen@alumni.ubc.ca)

• **Textbook information, websites, additional resources**

Textbook: Sportiche, Dominique, Hida Koopman & Edward Stabler. (2014) *An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory* (First Edition). Wiley-Blackwell. [SKS]

Ling 300 Wiki

<http://wiki.ubc.ca/Course:LING300>

(to edit, log in with CWL username + password)

• **Background material:**

- Sobin, Nicholas. (2011) *Syntactic Analysis: The Basics*. Wiley-Blackwell. [S=Sobin]
- Carnie, Andrew. (2013). *Syntax: A Generative Introduction* (3rd edition). Wiley-Blackwell
- Carnie, Andrew. (2012) *The Syntax Workbook*. Wiley-Blackwell. (This accompanies the Carnie 2013 textbook.)

Wikipedia course page

be sure to enroll as a student

[UBC Ling 300 Wikipedia Course Page](#)

General Intro

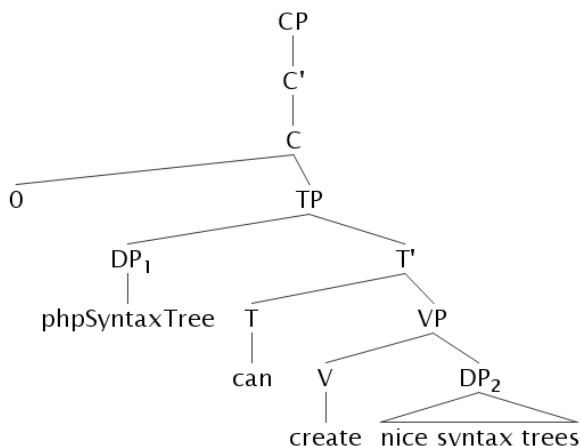
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Tutorial>

Article wizard

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Article_wizard

PhpSyntaxTree web-based tree drawing software (freeware)

<http://ironcreek.net/phpsyntaxtree/>



Learning Ecology

▪ Instructional strategy/teaching philosophy/rationales

The course involves you in data collection, observation, generalization, hypothesis formation, and hypothesis testing (experimentation). The course moves you from being a novice to a budding expert, and from being a information consumer of to a knowledge disseminator.

▪ List of topics

The course is organized around two parallel activities: (i) detecting and modeling syntactic relations; (ii) contributing to knowledge dissemination on a syntax topic by developing a Wikipedia article. There are five units:

	wk 1	Introduction
▪ Unit I	wks 2-3	Detecting surface syntax: binding theory (Ch. 7)
▪ Unit II	wks 3-5	Detecting abstract syntax: selection (Ch. 8); raising, control (Ch. 9)
	wk 6	Mid-term exam; in-class (15%)
▪ Unit III	wks 7-8	Detecting structural constraints: wh-questions (ch. 10)
▪ Unit IV	wks 9-10	Detecting structure: probing structures (Ch. 11)
▪ Unit V	wks 11-12	Detecting syntactic atoms: syntax & morphology (Ch. 12)
	wk 13	Wrap-up
	04 Dec 2014	Final exam; take-home (25%)
	11 Dec 2014	Posting of Wikipedia article (20%)
	12 Dec 2014	Peer & Self assessment 2 (summative)
	date TBA	Oral Presentation of Wikipedia Projects (5%)

▪ Ground rules/expectations

- **Curiosity.**
“Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton asked why.” ~Bernard Baruch
- **Patience.**
“Have patience. All things are difficult before they become easy.” ~ Saadi
- **Persistence.**
“Energy and persistence conquer all things.” ~ Benjamin Frankin
- **Trust.**
“Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do.” ~ Benjamin Spock

Evaluation Information

▪ Weighting of assignments and exams

▪ 50%	Mastery of foundational content (individual assessment)		
	5 Problem sets	10%	@2% per Problem Set credit for completion
	2 Exams	40%	15% mid-term exam (in-class)
			25% final exam (take-home)
▪ 50%	Dissemination of knowledge (individual and group assessment)		
	5 Milestones	25%	@5% per Milestone graded
	2 Peer & self assessments	—	determines weighting of assessment of Wikipedia project
	1 Wikipedia article	25%	5% 10 minute oral presentation
			20% posting of Wikipedia article
5%	Linguistics Outside the Classroom		up to 5% bonus credit for participation

▪ **Schedule of assignments and exams**

Students complete 5 *Problem sets* and 5 *Milestones*. Roughly, a *Problem set* is due once every two weeks, and a *Milestone* is due once every two weeks. In addition there are two exams (*mid-term* and comprehensive *final*), two *Peer & self assessments*, one *Oral presentation*, and the final submission of the *Wikipedia Project*.

DATE	ASSIGNMENT
Th 11 Sept	Problem set 1 (2%)
Th 18 Sept	Milestone 1/individual (5%)
Th 25 Sept	Problem set 2 (2%)
Th 02 Oct	Milestone 2 (5%)
Th 09 Oct	Mid-term exam (in-class; 15%)
Th 16 Oct	Peer & self assessment 1 (formative)
Th 23 Oct	Problem set 3 (2%)
Th 30 Oct	Milestone 3 (5%)
Th 06 Nov	Problem set 4 (2%)
Th 13 Nov	Milestone 4 (5%)
Th 20 Nov	Problem set 5 (2%)
Th 27 Nov	Milestone 5 (5%)
Th 04 Dec	Final exam (take-home; 25%)
Th 11 Dec	Posting of Wikipedia article (20%)
Fri 12 Dec	Peer & self assessment 2 (summative)
TBA (during final exam period)	Oral presentation of Wikipedia projects (5%)

▪ **Grading policies, criteria and rubrics**

▪ **General grading policies**

This course uses the UBC grading system: A+ (90-100); A (85-89); A- (80-84); B+ (76-79); B (72-75); B- (68-71); C+ (64-67); C (60-63); C- (55-59); D (50-54); F (0-49).

- All assignments are due at midnight of the due date.
- Late assignments are not accepted.
- No make-up exams are offered.

▪ **Grading policies for Problem Sets**

There are five *Problem Sets* weighted at 2% each for a total of 10%; they are always due on a Thursday at midnight.

- To be completed individually; you can work on them as a group, but your answers should be your own.
- Assessed but not graded: the instructor and/or TA will provide feedback to the class as a whole, and if necessary, to individual students.
- Marks for completion of the entire *Problem Set*; incomplete *Problem Sets* receive a grade of zero. If you're stumped by a question, explicitly indicate what it is that you don't understand.
- Answer keys to the *Problem Sets* are posted on Connect on the Friday following the due date.
- Highlights from the *Problem Sets* are discussed in the following Tuesday class.

▪ **Grading policies for Wikipedia Milestones**

There are five *Milestones* weighted at 5% each for a total of 25%; they are always due on a Thursday at midnight.

- *Milestones* are completed by the Wikipedia Research Groups.
- Some *Milestones* completed individual, some by the group as a whole.
- Group *Milestones* are graded according to the rubrics posted on Connect.

▪ **Grading policies for Wikipedia Research Projects**

The Wikipedia Project is assessed based on: (i) posting of a *Wikipedia article* (20%); (ii) one *Oral presentation* (5%); (iii) two *Self & peer Assessments*.

- The *Wikipedia article* (20%) is a group activity.
- The *Oral presentation* (5%) is a group activity.
- The grade given to the *Presentation* and *Article* is the raw grade of the group as a whole.
- The two *Peer and self assessments* are individual activities: one is formative and one is summative.
 - *Formative Assessment* (completed after Milestone 2) provides feedback about group and individual performance. It does not count towards the final grade, but non-completion results in a 5% penalty. Anyone receiving a score of less than 75% will meet with the instructor and/or TA to develop an action plan.
 - *Summative Assessment* (completed after the Wikipedia Article is posted) assesses an individual's contribution to all aspects of the Wikipedia Project, and is used to calibrate the raw score of the group project. Anyone received a grade of less than 75% will have their final grade is adjusted downwards by re-calibrating the raw score of their Wikipedia project.

▪ **Extra Credit: Linguistics Outside the Classroom**

- Participation in *Linguistics Outside the Classroom* is optional for this course. This is a means of increasing your involvement in learning about linguistics outside of regular classroom instruction. There are two ways of satisfying this option.
 - (1) One way is by participating in two points worth of experiments being run by researchers in the Department of Linguistics. To sign up for experiments, please visit <https://ubclinguistics.sona-systems.com> to register and participate. Experiments typically take anywhere from 15 minutes to 1 hour and offer the opportunity to contribute to and learn about linguistics research first hand. Your participation in research is voluntary.
 - (2) A second way of completing this requirement is by attending two Linguistics research seminars or colloquia and writing a one-paragraph summary of the talk, which you turn into your instructor within a week of attending. You can browse the talk series here: <http://www.linguistics.ubc.ca/events>. You can also satisfy this requirement by participating in one experiment and summarizing one talk.
- Satisfying either option (1) or option (2) will count as extra credit, and can contribute up to a maximum of 5% of your final grade (the actual weight might be less than 5%).
- If you plan to participate in *Linguistics Outside the Classroom*, please inform the Instructor and TA by e-mail of your intention.

▪ **Course Policies**

- Attendance is obligatory; see UBC student code of conduct: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,36,0,0>
- All UBC policies regarding academic conduct (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will be strictly followed. For details see <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>.
- In case of sickness, notify the Instructor and TA by e-mail **before** class.
- In case of disability, notify the Instructor of special accommodations.
- Last day for change of registration or withdrawal without W standing ("add-drop"): **Tuesday, 16 Sept**
- Last day to withdraw with a W standing: **Friday, 10 Oct**

Additional Information

- **What I expect of you: time and effort**
 - Attend regularly
 - Participate actively
 - Complete assignments on time
 - Maintain a respectful classroom environment: arrive on time, stay for entire period
 - Be fully present: don't multi-task, don't distract others

- **What you can expect of the teaching team: time and effort**
 - Clear instruction and explanation
 - Respectful and engaging learning environment
 - Timely assessment and feedback
 - Timely (but not instantaneous!) response to queries (i.e., not available 24-7)

- **How to do well in this course**
 - **Read** the chapters in advance of the lecture.
 - **Complete the practice problems** in advance of the lecture.
 - **Read actively:** make sure that you understand the material.
 - **Engage** with the course material actively.
 - If you don't understand the readings, submit questions (by e-mail) BEFORE the lecture.
 - If you don't understand the lectures, talk to the TA or Instructor as soon as you can after the lecture. (Don't wait in the hopes that it will become clearer as the course progresses.)
 - If something isn't clear, ask questions: in class, in your groups, via e-mail, at office hours... (There is no such thing as a "stupid question". Questions provide valuable feedback to the instructor.)
 - **Listen** actively.
 - **Connect** the dots. Learn concepts, not factoids.
 - **Don't fall behind.** If you do fall behind, let the TA know immediately, and work out a strategy for catching up. (Don't wait until it's too late!)

- **Campus support services**
 - **General Support Services**
 - Connect:* Student Resources: <http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/student-resources/>
 - UBC Learning Commons:* <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>
 - Arts Academic Advising:* <http://students.arts.ubc.ca/advising/>
 - Linguistics Advising:* <http://www.linguistics.ubc.ca/ug>
 - Student Services:* <http://www.students.ubc.ca/livewelllearnwell/counselling-services/>

 - **Support Services for this Course**
 - *Each other:* use the Wikipedia talk pages as a communication tool
 - *Wikipedia editing,* UBC CTLT in-class workshop, Th 11 Sept 2014
 - *Research Skills Workshop,* UBC Library in-class workshop, Th 25 Sept 2014
 - *Arts ISIT drop-in,* Tu/Th 23-25 Sept, 12.00-1.30pm (more may be scheduled as needed)
 - *Wikipedia culture,* in-class presentation by Wikipedian, Th 9 Oct 2014
 - *Syntax Tutorials,* every Tuesday (3.00-4.00pm) & Thursday (1.00-2.00pm); try to attend one per week

Week-by-week schedule of activities

wk	date	In-class activities	Readings	Assignments & Activities
Introduction				
1	Tu 02 Sept	Imagine Day (no class)		
	Th 04 Sept	Introduction to Course Using Hypothesis-Testing to Detect Syntactic Structure Using Wikipedia for Knowledge Dissemination	<i>Wiki1</i>	WP online training
Unit I: Detecting surface syntax				
2	Tu 09 Sept	Review of Constituency Tests and X-bar Theory	<i>SKS6</i>	select article to assess
	Th 11 Sept	Detecting Referential Dependencies: Binding Theory 1 • <i>Intro to Wiki(pedia) editing</i> : Will Engels, CTLT)	<i>7.1-7.4</i> <i>Wiki2</i>	Problem set 1
3	Tu 16 Sept	Detecting Referential Dependencies: Binding Theory 2	<i>7.5-7.9</i>	WP online Quiz (Connect)
Unit II: Detecting abstract syntax				
4	Th 18 Sept	Local Selection 1	<i>8.1-8.4</i> <i>Wiki3</i>	Milestone 1 assess article
	Tu 23 Sept	Local Selection 2 • <i>Wikipedia Project</i> , Arts ISIT drop-in, 12.00-1.30	<i>8.5-8.10</i>	add content; start bblbio.
	Th 25 Sept	Raising & Control 1 • <i>Research Skills Workshop</i> (Sheryl Adams, SLAIS) • <i>Wikipedia Project</i> , Arts ISIT drop-in, 12.00-1.30	<i>9.1-9.2</i> <i>Wiki4</i>	Problem set 2
5	Tu 30 Sept	Raising & Control 2	<i>9.3-9.5</i>	
	Th 02 Oct	Review for mid-term exam		Milestone 2 bblbio.
6	Tu 07 Oct	Mid-term Exam (in-class)		
	Th 09 Oct	Q&A: Wikipedia Culture, interacting on Wikipedia, etc. (in-class visit by real-life Wikipedian)		post plan on talk page
Unit III: Detecting Structural Constraints				
7	Tu 14 Oct	Detecting locality: WH-movement 1	<i>10.1-3</i> <i>Wiki6</i>	move to main space
	Th 16 Oct	Detecting locality: WH-movement 2	<i>10.4-5</i>	Self & peer assessment 1
8	Tu 21 Oct	Detecting locality: WH-movement 3	<i>10.6-7</i>	nominate for "Did you know?"
	Th 23 Oct	Wikipedia Project: in-class Workshop (xxx)		Problem set 3
Unit IV: Detecting structure: tricks of the trade				
9	Tu 28 Oct	<i>Detecting structure 1: derived & underlying structures</i>	<i>11.1-2</i>	expand
	Th 30 Oct	<i>Detecting structure 2: Q-float, focus particles</i>	<i>11.3</i>	Milestone 3 peer review
10	Tu 04 Nov	<i>Detecting structure 3: binding, q-scope</i>	<i>11.4-5</i>	revise
	Th 06 Nov	Wikipedia Project: In-class Workshop		Problem set 4
11	Tu 11 Nov	Remembrance Day, University closed.		revise
	Th 13 Nov	Syntactic Atoms 1: Head Movement	<i>12.1-2</i>	Milestone 4 submit for GA
Unit V: Detecting syntactic atoms				
12	Tu 18 Nov	Syntactic Atoms 2: Causative Affixes & vP shells	<i>12.3-4</i>	revise
	Th 20 Nov	Syntactic Atoms 3: A model of (morpho-)syntax	<i>12.5-10</i>	Problem set 5
13	Tu 25 Nov	Review for final exam		revise
	Th 27 Nov	Wikipedia workshop: groups meet with Instructor & TA; group members meet with each other to plan final revisions.		Milestone 5 reflective essay; nominate for FA
	Th 04 Dec	Final Exam due (take-home)		
	Th 11 Dec	Final submission of Wikipedia Article		
	Fri 12 Dec	Self & peer assessment 2		
	DATE TBA	Oral presentation of Wikipedia Project (Note: this will take place during Final Exam period)		

Name: _____

UBC student no.: _____

Wikipedia project topics

You'll be assigned to work with a group on a Wikipedia project.

To assist us in forming the groups, from the following list of topics, indicate what your top five choices are. ("1" us your top-ranked choice, followed by 2, 3, 4, and 5.)

- _____ Bootstrapping
- _____ Grammaticality
- _____ Locality
- _____ Performance
- _____ Adjectival noun
- _____ Inalienable possession
- _____ Equative
- _____ Nominal
- _____ Lexical semantics
- _____ Head parameter
- _____ Subject parameter
- _____ Theta criterion
- _____ Bound variable pronoun
- _____ Logical Form
- _____ Logophoricity
- _____ PRO

Name: _____

UBC student no.: _____

Calibration exercise

Given the phrase structure representation (“tree diagram”) of the following sentence.

The quick brown fox proudly bragged that he could jump over the lazy dog.

(Don't worry if you don't know how to draw all the parts. The goal of this exercise is to give us an idea of who knows what (as you're each coming in with different backgrounds); this will allow us to better calibrate the beginning part of the course.)

Course Contract

Student acknowledgment

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus, that I understand my role as a student in this course, and that I understand what my commitments are in terms of assignments and exams.

name: _____

signature: _____

date: _____

UBC student ID: _____

Instructor acknowledgment

I hereby acknowledge that I have designed the course with the best interests of the student in mind, that I understand my role as a facilitator in this course, and that I understand what my commitments are in terms of instruction and assessment.

name: _____

signature: _____

date: _____