

---

LINGUIST 503  
Intermediate Syntax  
Spring 2006, Herter 107, TTh 9.30-10.45  
<http://people.umass.edu/bhatt/503-s06/>

Rajesh Bhatt  
224 South College  
Office Hours: TBA or by appointment  
7-0797, [bhatt@linguist.umass.edu](mailto:bhatt@linguist.umass.edu)

---

### Topics:

This course is a continuation of LINGUIST 401: Introduction to Syntax and it addresses in greater detail the questions introduced in that course. What syntactic properties are shared by all natural languages? What syntactic properties distinguish them? What do we know when we know a language? This course aims to equip students with the ability to address these questions in a precise and informed way.

The course will have two parts. The first part of the course will provide an introduction to certain basic concepts of contemporary syntactic theory: A-movement (simplex clauses, passivization, raising constructions and clausal complementation more generally) and A-bar-movement (wh-movement and relativization) and as part of this introduction motivate commonly-used syntactic diagnostic tools. The second part of this class will focus on a particular syntactico-semantic process: *comparison*. We will use our tools and basic understanding of syntax to explore the syntax of comparison. Comparison has both syntactic and semantic components and a proper investigation of it will lead us to add to our syntactic and especially our semantic toolkit.

The first part of the course will be mostly me lecturing but the second part will be very hand on. It will be arranged like a workshop. Each of you will adopt a language and will report on the comparative constructions found in your language. This means that you will make occasional presentations in class. This class satisfies a writing component and your report on comparative constructions in your language of choice will satisfy this requirement.

Part 1: hierarchical structure, binding theory, argument structure, case,  $\theta$ -roles, complementation, movement, A-movement, A-bar-movement, traces, passivization, raising, control, *wh*-movement, relativization

Part 2: phrasal vs. clausal comparatives, the semantics of adjectives, movement inside comparatives, syntactic structures for comparatives, adjectival vs. attributive comparatives, metalinguistic comparatives, analytic vs. synthetic comparatives, ellipsis in comparative constructions, semantic scope of comparatives

**Prerequisites:**

Linguist 401 (Introduction to Linguistics) or the consent of the instructor

**Requirements:**

- participation in class, in e-mail, or during my office hours (10%)
- a weekly question (10%)
- regular homework assignments (30%)
- one take-home exam (on Part 1) (assigned March 9, due March 16) (25%)
- a report on comparative constructions in the language you have worked on (first draft due on April 13, final version due on May 16) (25%)

**Some Policies:**

- You are welcome to work together on the regular assignments, but joint assignments are not allowed. Please list the names of everyone you worked with at the top of each assignment.
- You cannot work together on the exams.
- The assignments and exams will address only material that we covered in class (and appropriate extensions of it). So active and engaged participation in the class meetings is essential to your success on them.
- I will drop your lowest regular-assignment grade (even if it is a 0) if you participate in one of the experiments being run by UMass Linguistics researchers this semester. These experiments typically involve speaking, writing, or listening.
- Late assignments will only be accepted in the case of medical or other emergencies.

I will make the lecture slides available online on the website and occasionally distribute short, compulsory reading assignments. In addition to these, there is a text that might be useful.

*Syntax: A Generative Introduction*, Andrew Carnie, Blackwell Publishing, 2002. (ISBN 0-631-22544-7)