
LINGUIST 601
Introduction to Transformational Grammar
Fall 2006, Herter 444, TuTh 1.00-2.15
people.umass.edu/bhatt/601-f06/

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Topics:

General Topics: Universal Grammar, Parameters, Features, Constituency, Displacement, the model of the grammar

Global Questions: How are linguistic structures built? Where do linguistic principles apply?

X-bar theory : specifiers vs. complements, arguments vs. adjuncts, similarities between nominal and sentential structure

Case theory : abstract, inherent, and morphological case. The Case filter. The visibility hypothesis. The relationship between case and theta-roles and Expletives. ECM. nominative-accusative vs. ergative-absolutive patterns. Case and Agreement.

Binding Theory : Conditions A, B, and C, the role of structural relationships such as c-command, the role of locality, binding domains

Argument Structure : the structural analysis of argument structure, unergatives and unaccusatives, variable unaccusativity, decomposing transitivity: the little *v* hypothesis, passives, Burzio's Generalization. Case as motivation for movement.

A-movement : Raising as movement, distinction between raising and control, the control as movement debate, infinitival complementation, restructuring, PRO and *pro*.

A'-movement : wh-movement, relativization, clefts; potentially unbounded nature, constraints on A-bar movements, islands. Decomposition of islands into subjacency and the Empty Category Principle. Argument-adjunct asymmetries. Successive cyclic nature of wh-movement. Reconstruction effects. Other properties of A-bar movement: Strong Crossover, Weak Crossover, Parasitic Gaps, properties of A-bar traces.

Head-movement : the English auxiliary system, English vs. French, V2 in Germanic languages. Nature of constraints on movement. Locality effects on movement - relativized minimality effects.

Reference texts:

1. *Core Syntax: A minimalist approach*, David Adger, Oxford, 2003. (ISBN 0-19-924370-0)
2. *The Handbook of Contemporary Syntactic Theory*, edited by Mark Baltin and Chris Collins, Blackwell, 2001. (ISBN 0631205071)
3. *The Syntax Companion*, CDROM, Blackwell, 2006.

Requirements: vigorous participation in class discussion, regular readings and homework assignments, one mid-term exam and a final exam. Both the exams will be take home exams.