LING 6970

Special Topics in Linguistics
專題研究

SYNTAX AND SYNTACTIC TYPOLOGY
句法與句法類型學

Course Description:
This course gives in-depth treatment of both fundamental concepts and topics in syntactic typology and morphosyntax which can be analysed from different theoretical perspectives. Examples of different phenomena will be drawn from a variety of language families but with a particular focus on the applicability to Sinitic languages.

Syntactic and semantic constraints will be explored in the attempt to explain what is predictable on the basis of language universals research and what is unexpected or rare. Diachronic sources are also taken into account in the seminar discussions to examine how languages change and how new clause-level constructions and alignments arise.

Learning Outcomes:
Postgraduate students taking a course in *Special Topics in Linguistics: Syntax & Syntactic Typology* will benefit from training that is not covered in the regular linguistic programme:

First, they will gain familiarity with the descriptive apparatus of syntactic typology and its fundamental concepts.

Second, students should achieve a much broader knowledge base for linguistic analysis, and be able to come up with research questions that may go beyond their area of specialization.

To this end, a major goal will be to encourage critical discussion and assessment of different theoretical approaches in the analysis of a range of current topics in linguistics.

Course syllabus	
Topic	**Contents/fundamental concepts**
Transitivity and valency	Argument structure of the clause: ambitransitive, unergative and unaccusative verb classes; Valency alternations & argument coding: Active, passive, middle voice and impersonal constructions
Differential coding	Optional case marking of subjects, objects and peripheral arguments in the world's languages; split ergativity
Nonverbal predication	Non-prototypical predication: Existential, locative, possessive and copular constructions; impersonal and anti-impersonal constructions
Causative constructions	Morphosyntactic types of causative constructions: lexical, morphological and analytic; semantic causative

	types: coercive, directive and sociative; causativization operations
Applicative constructions	Types of applicative constructions: benefactive, instrumental & comitative; applicativization operations; flexivalency
Participant roles	Roles & coding: external possession; psych-verb & experiencer constructions; psych-alternations

Course components: Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face	Percentage of time
Lectures on-site face-to-face in seminar mode, including discussion forum for assigned reading, particularly in the third hour of each session **Out-of-classroom**	33.3% (39 hours)
Assigned reading, class preparation and assignments	66.6% (78 hours)

Assessment type	Percentage
1. Presentation of assigned articles or book chapters Lead critical discussion of at least one of the weekly assigned readings (20 minutes)	30%
2. Participation in discussion Contribution to weekly seminar discussions, including responses to questions on reading materials	10%
3. Term project (essay) In-depth treatment of a topic in syntax in a typological, crosslinguistic perspective, comparing two theoretical approaches (*Choose from lecture topics*) (3500 – 4000 words)	40%
4. Presentation (oral) of term project to class (20+10 minutes discussion)	20%

Assessment rubrics	
Grade	**LING6970 Syntax and syntactic typology**
A	Demonstration of a thorough and nuanced understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, combined with a high degree of competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of problems in syntax, showing a full understanding key issues in the form of an 1) outstanding ability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax; 2) outstanding ability to present an assigned topic and write an original term paper.
A-	Demonstration of a thorough understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, and a high degree of competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of syntactic problems, showing only minor weaknesses in understanding key issues, but overall an 1) excellent ability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax; 2) excellent ability to present an assigned topic and write an original term paper.
B	Demonstration of a good understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, and a degree of competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of syntactic problems, showing some weaknesses in understanding key issues, but overall a

	1) good ability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax;
	2) good ability to present an assigned topic and the write a well-organized term paper.
C	Demonstration of an adequate understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, and a degree of competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of syntactic problems, showing some weaknesses in understanding key issues, but overall an 1) adequate ability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax; 2) adequate ability to present an assigned topic and write a satisfactory term paper.
D	Demonstration of some understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, and limited competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of syntactic problems, showing major weaknesses in understanding a spectrum of topics, and overall a 1) weak ability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax; 2) weak ability to present an assigned topic and write a satisfactory term paper.
F	Demonstration of minimal understanding of theoretical and methodological issues in the topics discussed on syntax, with very limited competency in integrating this knowledge and applying it to the analysis of syntactic problems, and lacking understanding across a spectrum of topics, and overall an 1) inability to understand and discuss major issues in syntax; 2) inability to present an assigned topic and write a satisfactory term paper.

Required reading:

Chappell, Hilary. (1999). The double unaccusative in Sinitic languages. In: Doris L. Payne and Immanuel Barshi (eds.) *External Possession.* (Typological Studies in Language Series 39). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp.197-232.

Chappell, Hilary. (2023). From oblique to core case in the Southern Min languages: the role of topic in the emergence of optional object marking in Sinitic. *Journal of Historical Linguistics.* https://doi.org/10.1075/jhl.21038

Chappell, Hilary. (Forthcoming, 2024). Syncretism of applicative and causative markers in Northern Sinitic languages. In Huy-Linh Dao, Danh-Thành Do-Hurinville & Daniel Petit (eds.), *L'applicatif dans les langues: Regard typologique.* Paris: Editions de la Société de Linguistique de Paris, 225-257.

Chappell, Hilary & Denis Creissels. (2019). Topicality and the typology of predicative possession. *Linguistic Typology* 23.3 468-532. https://doi.org/10.1515/lingty-2019-0016

Chappell, Hilary & Shanshan Lü. (2022). A semantic typology of location, existence, possession and copular verbs: Polysemy sharing in Mainland East and Southeast Asia. *Linguistics: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the Language Sciences.* 60.1: 1-82. https://doi.org/10.1515/ling-2021-0219

Chappell, Hilary & Jean-Christophe Verstraete. (2019). Optional case marking: synchrony and diachrony. Avec *Language and Linguistic Compass* 13.3 https://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12311

Creissels, Denis. (Forthcoming, 2024). *Transitivity, valency and voice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Croft, William. (2022). *Morphosyntax: Constructions of the World's Languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Selected chapters)

Dixon, R.M.W. (2010. *Basic Linguistic Theory: Grammatical topics*, Volume 2. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK. (Selected chapters)

Dixon, R.M.W. (2012). *Basic Linguistic Theory: Further grammatical topics*, Volume 3. Oxford University Press, Oxford. (Selected chapters)

McGregor, William B. (2009). Typology of ergativity. *Language and linguistics compass.* 3.1 : 480-508.

Recommended reading:

Croft, William. (2003). *Typology and universals*. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Payne, Doris L. & Immanuel Barshi. (1999). External possession: What, Where, How and Why.
    In Doris L. Payne & Immanuel Barshi (eds.), *External Possession.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John
    Benjamins, 3-29.

Shopen, T. (Ed.). (2007). *Language typology and syntactic description* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press (3 volumes).

Feedback for evaluation:

(i) Students may contact Prof. Chappell on her email address to provide feedback, ask questions or seek an appointment:
hilary.chappell@cuhk.edu.hk

(ii) A mid-term open discussion will be offered

(iii) Questionnaires will be distributed to students at the end of the term for the course evaluation

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Course schedule			
Class/ week	**Date**	**Topic**	**Requirements**
Topic 1	9 January 2024	*Introduction to syntax*: fundamental concepts	Creissels (2024), Chapter 1: *Introduction,* sections 1.1–1.3 Dixon (2010), chapter 13: *Transitivity*
Topic 2	16 January 2024	*Transitivity and valency*	Creissels (2024), Chapter 3: *Syntactic transitivity* Croft (2022), Chapter 6: *Event structure and argument coding*
Topic 3	23 January 2024	*Differential coding I*: Agents and patients	Creissels (2024), Chapter 4: *The transitive construction* Chappell & Verstraete (2019) on optional case marking of core arguments
Topic 4	30 January 2024	*Differential coding II*: Further kinds of split systems	Creissels (2024), Chapter 5: *Transitive-intransitive alignment* McGregor (2009) on a typology of ergativity, including split ergativity
Topic 5	6 February 2024	*Nonverbal predication I*: Existential, locative and impersonal constructions	Chappell & Lü (2022) on a semantic typology of nonverbal predication in Asian languages Creissels (2024), Chapter 6: *Impersonal and anti-impersonal constructions*
CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR: 9-15 February 2024			

Topic 6	20 February 2024	*Nonverbal predication II:* Copulae, HAVE-Possessives & juxtaposition	Chappell & Creissels (2019) on topicality & predicative possession Croft (2022), Chapter 10 *Non-prototypical predication and nonpredicational clauses*
Topic 7	27 February 2024	*Causative constructions I:* Causative types across the world	Shibatani & Pardeshi (2012) on a semantic typology of causative constructions Creissels (2024), Chapter 12: *Causativization*
READING WEEK : 4 – 9 March 2024			
Topic 8	12 March 2024	*Causative constructions II:* Causativization and valency change	Creissels (2024), Chapter 13: *Non-causative A/S-nucleativization* Croft (2022), Chapter 9: *Argument coding and voice: Salience of peripheral participants*
Topic 9	19 March 2024	*Applicative constructions I:* Applicativization processes and targeted roles	Creissels (2024), Chapter 14: *Applicativization* Dixon (2012), Chapter 25: *Applicatives*
Topic 10	26 March 2024	*Applicative constructions II:* Applicatives in Asia	Creissels (2024), Chapter 15: *Flexivalency* Chappell (forthcoming, 2024) on applicative constructions in Northern Sinitic
Topic 11	2 April 2024	*Participant Roles I:* External Possession, Possessor-Raising constructions & "ethic" datives	Payne & Barshi (1999) – Introduction on external possession Chappell (1999) on the double unaccusative construction in Sinitic
Topic 12	9 April 2024	*Participant Roles II:* Experiencers and psych-verb constructions	Creissels (2024), Chapter 2.1-2.2: *Participant roles, participant coding and constituent order* Chapter 11.7 : *Dative-experiencer middles* Chapter 16.3: *The psych alternation*
Week 14 of Term 2: 16 April 2024 *Postgraduate workshop:* *Presentations of students' research projects* **(20%)**			
Major research project due on 2 May 2024 by 24:00 (40%)			

Contact details for course coordinator

Professor	

Name:	Hilary CHAPPELL
Office Location:	G16, Level 1, Leung Kau Kui Building
Telephone:	3943 7053
Email:	hilary.chappell@cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Venue:	Tuesdays 1:30 - 4:15 ERB_406

Details of course website

All course announcements and materials can be found on Blackboard.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.

- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.

- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

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Use of generative AI tools
Approach 1 - All use of AI tools is prohibited in assignments and assessment tasks