

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
1st term, 2025-2026

<p>Course Code: LING 5102A Title in English: Foundations II: Syntax and Semantics Title in Chinese: 句法學及語義學基礎</p>
<p>Course Description: The course aims to introduce to the students the important theoretical concepts in generative syntax and in syntax-semantics interface. The first part of the course will be focusing on Principles & Parameters modal (P&P) of the generative syntax, which is also known as Government & Binding Theory (GB). It explores the common properties of human languages (Universal Grammar) and systematic differences between different languages (parametric differences). Examples to illustrate the working of Universal Grammar and parametric differences will be from the more familiar languages such as English and Mandarin Chinese to the less familiar languages, such as Germanic and Romance languages, Japanese, etc. Core theories in GB will be discussed: X-bar Theory, Theta Theory, Case Theory, Binding Theory, movement theory (Head-movement, A-movement & A'-movement), Locality, etc. The second part of this course will focus on research problems related to syntax-semantics interface, such as quantification.</p>

Course syllabus:

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Contents/fundamental concepts</i>	<i>Recommended readings</i>
The Generative Enterprise: P&P modal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innateness of Language Faculty - Mental grammar - Principles and Parameters framework 	Haegeman (1994): Intro. Ouhalla (1999): ch. 1 Poole (2011): ch. 1 Carnie (2012): ch. 1
X'-Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phrase structure - X'-theory (Why? How?) - Projections: NP, DP, VP, IP/TP, CP. 	Haegeman (1994): ch. 2 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 2, 6 Poole (2011): ch. 2, 3 Carnie (2012): ch. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
Theta Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic structure - Theta role assignment, θ-criterion - Argument structures - A-positions, θ-positions 	Haegeman (1994): ch. 1 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 7 Poole (2011): ch. 4 Carnie (2012): ch. 8
Case Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theory of abstract Case - Government - Case filter, Visibility Hypothesis, inherent case - DP hypothesis 	Haegeman (1994): ch. 3 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 8 Poole (2011): ch. 4 Carnie (2012): ch. 11
Binding Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Binding conditions A, B and C - Coreference, referential dependency - Anaphora, pronouns, referential expressions - Control vs. Raising - <i>pro</i>-drop and Null Subject Parameter 	Haegeman (1994): ch. 4, 5 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 9 Poole (2011): ch. 5 Carnie (2012): ch. 5, 15, 17

Movement Theory	- A-movement/NP-movement - Burzio's generalization - Raising verbs, passivization - ECM verbs, unaccusatives, ergatives, unergatives - VP-subject-internal hypothesis	Haegeman (1994): ch. 6 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 8 Poole (2011): ch. 6 Carnie (2012): ch. 11
	- Head-movement - A'-movement, A'-positions, A'-dependency - <i>Wh</i> -movement, relativization, topicalization	Haegeman (1994): ch. 7 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 8 Poole (2011): ch. 6 Carnie (2012): ch. 12
Locality	- Subjacency, bounding nodes - Island constraints, island types (strong, weak) - Empty Category Principle (ECP), intermediate traces - Condition on Extraction Domain (CED) - Parasitic gap, adjunct island - Resumptive pronoun (Optional topic)	Haegeman (1994): ch. 7, 8 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 10 Poole (2011): ch. 6
Logical Form & Quantification	- Quantifiers: \exists , \forall - Quantifier Raising (QR) and LF-movement - Arguments for covert <i>wh</i> -movement: selectional restriction, crossover effects (weak, strong) - Locality constraints on LF-movement - ECP revisited, superiority effects, adjunct traces - Barriers (optional topic) - Reconstruction effects, Ellipsis, Intervention effects	Haegeman (1994): ch. 9, 10 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 10 Poole (2011): ch. 7, 8 Huang (1982) Tsai (1994) Reihart (1997. 1998. 2006)

Learning outcomes:

This course aims

- to familiarize students with the goals, core assumptions and technical notions in the P&P modal of the generative grammar;
- to familiarize students with major constructions that have important bearings on Universal Grammar and parametric differences;
- To help students further develop skills in logical analysis and critical thinking.

Course components (Teaching modes and Learning activities)

Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face (please specify if it is hybrid, i.e. some students will attend the activities elsewhere)	Percentage of time
<i>Lectures (hybrid: no)</i>	100%
Online synchronous	
<i>Interactive tutorial</i>	Free, optional, additional hours

Learning activities:

Lecture (hr) in class	Assignment (hr) out class	Reading (hr) out class
3	1 (on average)	3
Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory

Assessment scheme:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Points</i>
Assignment 1	15
Assignment 2	20
Assignment 3	25
Assignment 4 or Final exam	40
Total=	100

Grade Descriptions:

Grade	Overall Course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. The student demonstrates a deep understanding of the theoretical and empirical motivations for the generative syntactic approach. S/he is able to use diagnostic tests creatively to analyze syntactic structures, both novel and taught. Coherent syntactic argumentation can be well articulated. The knowledge synthesized enables them to discover theoretical gaps and suggest alternative in syntactic theories.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. The student should have a comprehensive understanding of the generative syntactic approach. S/he is able to properly explain the relations between syntactic concepts and conduct relevant syntactic tests in analyzing structures discussed in class and novel structures.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. The student has a reasonable understanding of the generative syntactic theory. S/he is able to propose and apply relevant syntactic tests in analyzing structures taught in the course. But some problems are found in analyses.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. The student only demonstrates reasonable but partial understanding of the syntactic theory and principles, and is able to collate relevant information or enumerate some tests in analyzing syntactic structures. However, there are obvious problems in justifying the proposed syntactic analysis
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. The student is able to recall some concepts taught and name some relevant syntactic tests. However, understanding of the relations between concepts is generally poor. S/he can only provide some vague description of the syntactic structures taught without justifications.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements. The students can only name the concepts at best and barely have any understanding of the relations between them. They have little idea how structures are described and diagnosed.

Learning resources

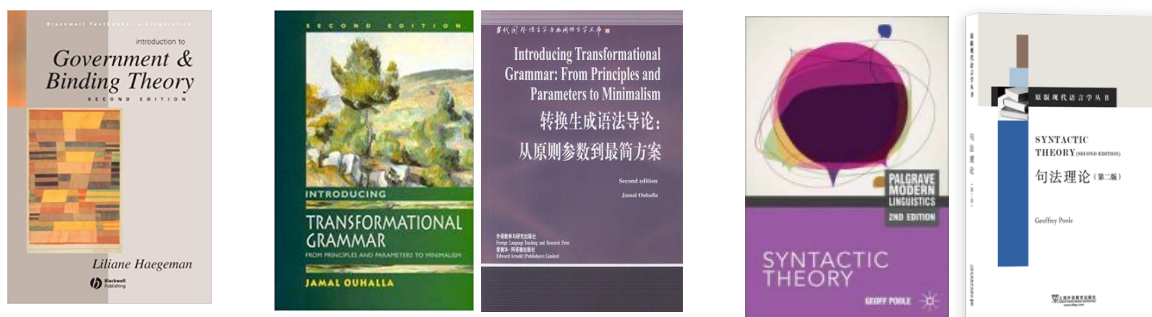
- Detailed lecture handouts will be distributed to students each week.

Useful References

A. Recommended textbooks

1. Haegeman, Liliane (1994). *Introduction to Government & Binding Theory (Second edition)*, Blackwell Publishing.
(This is the most extensive and complete version of the GB theory; however, it is long with much detailed explanation. If you have time, this book is highly recommended.)
2. Ouhalla, Jamal (1999). *Introducing Transformational Grammar: From Principles and Parameters to Minimalism (Second edition)*, Arnold Publishers. (essentially. ch. 6-9)
 - The authorized reprinted English version published by *Waiyu Jiaoxue Yu Yanjiu Chubanshe* [Foreign Language Teaching and Researching Press].
(This version is exactly the same as its original Second edition)
3. Poole, Geoffrey (2011). *Syntactic Theory*, 2nd edition. Macmillan.
 - The authorized reprinted English version published by *Shanghai Waiyu Jiaoyu Chubanshe* [Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press].
(This version is exactly the same as its original Second edition)
(This is a good and concise textbook on GB theory. The essential topics are covered. If your time is limited, this book gives you an overview of the theory.)

(Any of the three recommended textbooks will be helpful to accompany your study.)



4. Carnie, Andrew. (2012/2021). *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. 3rd or 4th edition. Wiley Blackwell.
(- **Students who have no background on grammar are recommended to read chapters 2-4 before the first lecture of the course.**)

B. Useful textbooks for the Government & Binding Theory (GB) and for the Minimalist Program (MP) for the students who want to pursue syntax in the future.

1. Adger, David (2003). *Core Syntax - A Minimalist Approach*. Oxford University Press.
2. Hornstein Norbert, Jairo Nunes & Kleanthes Grohmann (2005) *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Bosković, Zeljko & Howard Lasnik (2007). *Minimalist Syntax: The Essential Readings*. Blackwell Publishing.
4. Haegeman, Liliane. (2006). *Thinking Syntactically: A Guide to Argumentation and Analysis*. Blackwell.

5. Radford, Andrew (2009) *Analysing English Sentences*. Cambridge University Press.

C. Reference books and handbooks for further research on syntax

1. Baltin, Mark and Chris Collins (2001). *The Handbook of Contemporary Syntactic Theory*. Blackwell.
2. Everaert, Martin and Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.) (2017). *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Syntax* (Second editions), Wiley Blackwell.
3. Boeckx, Cedric (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*. Oxford University Press.

Course schedule (subject to adjustment):

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics</i> (cf. List of Topics for details)	<i>Comments</i> <i>(to be adjusted)</i>
1	Sept 2	- Lecture 1 Introduction: Principles and Parameters Model (Handout #1) - Lecture 2 X'-Theory (I): constituency and tests (Handout #2, Handout # Tree for beginners)	
2	Sept 9	- Lecture 2 X'-Theory (II): X', VP, NP, TP (Handout #2)	- Sept 13, 14:30-16:30 Free optional online tutorial session (I)
3	Sept 16	- Lecture 2 X'-Theory (III): review of X', TP, CP (Handout #2) - Lecture 3 Theta Theory: argument structure, theta roles, Theta criterion (Handout #3)	- Assignment 1 distribution (Due Sept 23) - Sept 20: 14:30-16:30 Free optional online tutorial session (II)
4	Sept 23	- Lecture 4 Case Theory: Morphological case and Abstract Case, Case assignment, government, DP hypothesis (Handout #4)	
5	Sep 30	- Lecture 5 A-movement (I): passivization, unergatives, unaccusatives, ergativity (Handout #5)	- Oct 4: 14:30-16:30 Free optional online tutorial session (III)
	Oct 7	*****Public holiday – The day following the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival*****	
6	Oct 14	- Review of A-movement: different types of verbs - Lecture 5 A-movement (II): vP (Handout #5) - Lecture 6 Binding Theory: Principles A, B, C, governing categories, control, PRO (Handout #6)	- Assignment 2 distribution (Due October 21)

7	Oct 21	- Review: three types of infinitival constructions: raising, ECM, control - Lecture 7 A'-movement: <i>wh</i> -movement, relativization (Handout #7) - Lecture 8 Locality (I): Subjacency (Handout #8)	
8	Oct 28	- Lecture 8 Locality (II): subjacency parameter, ECP, CED, other types of islands (Handout #8)	
9	Nov 4	- Lecture 8 Locality (III): relativized minimality (Handout #8) - Lecture 9 Logical Form (I): QR, <i>wh</i> -in-situ, selectional restriction (Handout #9)	- Assignment 3 distribution (Due Nov 11) - Nov 8: 14:30-16:30 Free optional online tutorial session (IV)
10	Nov 11	- Lecture 9 Logical Form (II): crossover effects, conditions on LF-movement, ECP and LF (Handout #9)	
11	Nov 18	- Lecture 9 Logical Form (III): Reconstruction effects, Ellipsis, Intervention effects (Handout #9)	- Assignment 4 distribution (Due November 25)
12	Nov 25	(<i>If we still have time</i>) - Lecture 10 Unselective binding and choice functions (Handout #10)	

Feedback for evaluation:

Students are welcomed to give their comments and feedback on this course directly to the course teacher and the teaching assistant via emails. A mid-term course evaluation and an end-of-term course evaluation will be conducted.

Teacher's contact details

Professor/Lecturer/Instructor:	
Name:	Prof. Victor Junnan Pan
Office Location:	G15, Leung Kau Kui Building
Email:	victorjunnanpan(AT)cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Time & Venue (Lecture)	6:30 – 9:15 pm, Tuesday, Wu Ho Man Yuen Bldg 505
Website:	http://ling.cuhk.edu.hk/people/victor/
Office hours:	By appointment
Other information:	Language of instruction: English

Teaching assistant's contact details

Teaching Assistant/Tutor:	
Name:	Wang Zhuoqun
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Teaching Assistant/Tutor:	
Name:	Liu Zhuo
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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 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Use of generative AI tools

All use of AI tools is prohibited in assignments and assessment tasks.

For assignments and assessment tasks that count towards the final course grades, students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)*.

Any breach of the regulations will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's *Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty*.

In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

Guideline on sharing lecture recordings

1. The copyright of any lecture recordings shared in the course, whether they are produced by teachers, students, or peer note-takers, belongs to the University.
2. Students should not share these recordings with others without obtaining prior written consent from the teacher(s).