

Syntactic Analysis 2: \bar{A} -Movement

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Course Description

This course provides an introduction to issues and problems in the syntax of so-called “ \bar{A} -movement constructions” and presents a general picture of the fundamental role that these constructions have played in shaping and defining various aspects of linguistic theory. This course will combine the elements of an introductory class and a research seminar. As such, it will balance lecture and discussion, exercises and readings, and research and presentation.

Requirements

1. Several (probably three) homeworks will be assigned over the course of the quarter, mainly in the first half. These will focus on developing analytical skills and exploring particular empirical phenomena.

2. Students will continue the language journals they began in the winter, in line with the following schedule and topics:

Week 3: What is the basic syntax of restrictive relative clauses in your language?

Week 6: Do relative clauses in your language show island effects?

Week 9: Use the analytical tools and argumentation techniques developed over the course of the quarter to identify some \bar{A} -movement construction in your language distinct from relative clauses and *wh*-questions.

3. A research paper on any topic in syntax or the syntax-semantics interface will be due at the end of the quarter. Students are required to submit six copies of a one-page abstract outlining the project at the beginning of the eighth week of class, and to review and comment on the other students’ abstracts. Finally, students will present their work at a syntax workshop during reading week.

Deadlines

- Assignments will be handed out on Wednesdays and due the following Monday.
- Five copies of a one-page abstract detailing the research project will be due on Monday, May 20.
- The syntax workshop will be Wednesday, June 5, 12.30-3.30. Students will have 20 minutes to present their work, plus 10 minutes for questions.
- The paper will be due in my office by the end of the day on Wednesday, June 12.

Readings

The readings for the course will be made available in the Linguistics Department office for copying.

The Plan

The italicized readings are not required, but are either ‘classic’ papers on the relevant topics, or constitute good starting points for further reading/research on those topics. The relation between syntax and semantics will be a common theme throughout the quarter; sometimes explicit (e.g., during week 5), always implicit. Chapters 5-8 of Heim and Kratzer 1998 specifically address the semantic analysis of the constructions we will be looking at in this course, so I highly recommend you read through these as we go through the quarter.

Week 1: What is \bar{A} -movement?

Movement types and linguistic theory Chomsky 1977; *Bresnan 1975, 1977*
Questions and relative clauses McCawley 1988 (ch. 13), *Sag 1997*

Weeks 2-3: Diagnosing \bar{A} -movement

Islands Ross 1967; Chomsky 1977; *McCawley 1988* (ch. 15)
Parasitic gaps *Engdahl 1983*

Week 4: Successive-cyclic movement

Complementizers in Irish McCloskey 2001
Quantifier float in Ulster English McCloskey 2000

Week 5: Logical Form

Antecedent-contained deletion Kennedy 1997, *Hornstein 1994*
Reconstruction effects *Lebeaux 1992; Heycock 1995; Fox 1999*
The semantics of \bar{A} -movement Heim and Kratzer 1998 (chs. 7-8)

Weeks 6-7: Some interesting asymmetries

Argument vs. adjunct extraction Huang 1982; *Lasnik and Saito 1984*
Overt *wh*-movement vs. *wh*-in situ Pesetsky 1987; Cole and Hermon 1994
Multiple *wh*-movement *Richards 1997; Pesetsky 2000*

Weeks 7-8: The Empty Category Principle

Relativized Minimality Rizzi 1990 (chs. 1,3); *Chomsky 1986*
‘Referentiality’ and \bar{A} -movement Chung 1994; *Cinque 1990* (ch. 1)

Week 9: When islands disappear

Attributive comparative deletion Kennedy and Merchant 2000
Sluicing Chung et al. 1995; Merchant 2002, 2001

Week 10: Looking ahead

The state-of-the theory
Syntax workshop Wednesday, June 5

References

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