LING 21820/31820: The Morphology-Syntax Interface
Winter 2022

T, Th 12:30-1:50 pm
Cobb 202
Zoom Link

Instructor:	Jessica Kantarovich
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Office hours:	By appointment (Rosenwald 205G or Zoom)

Course Description

This seminar explores the division of labor between the morphological apparatus and the syntactic apparatus in the formation of words and sentences in language, and the extent to which these can be thought of as truly separate domains. We will cover a wide range of topics and approaches concerned with morphosyntax, or the tricky middle ground where both morphology and syntax are at play to varying degrees. Examples of specific topics that will be covered include: lexicalist and syntactic approaches to word formation, the relationship between argument structure and inflection, polysynthesis, ergativity, and noun incorporation. We will begin with a broad survey of theories of morphology and syntax and explicit commentary on the status of the morphology-syntax interface. We will then delve into the minutiae of specific phenomena.

Course Objectives

In the course of this class, students will:

1. Gain exposure to different structural phenomena such as word-formation, affix ordering, inflection, agreement, and polysynthesis, and understand how they access both the morphological and syntactic domains

2. Understand how different theories of syntax and morphology handle these phenomena

3. Learn about the status of these phenomena within linguistic typology

4. Develop and answer their own research questions about a topic at the heart of the morphology-syntax interface

5. Gain the ability to engage with academic literature targeting specific phenomena, in specific languages, within specific frameworks

Assignments

(a) **Readings.** There will be assigned reading for every class. It is expected that you will have read the assigned pages *before* class. I will lecture on unfamiliar linguistic concepts and unpack important themes from the texts; however, you should be prepared to seriously discuss the content.

(b) **Paper presentation.** In lieu of discussion posts, you will be expected to present on some of the assigned readings. **Undergraduate students** (i.e., those enrolled in LING 21820) will be expected to present one assigned reading to the class. **Graduate students** (i.e., those enrolled in LING 31820) will be expected to present two assigned readings to the class. A sign-up sheet will be made available during the first week of class.

Website: Slides and handouts from lecture, readings, assignments, and the rest of our materials will be posted on Canvas. Your assignments should be uploaded to Canvas; do not email them to me. Please contact me if you don't have access to the website.

Midterm papers

Your midterm assignment in this class will be a short response paper about our readings, due at the end of **Week 4**. I will distribute a prompt for the paper in Week 3. Papers should be **3-5 pages**, single-spaced.

Final papers

Your final assessment in this class will be a term paper on a subject of your choosing that interrogates the issues we've examined at the morphology-syntax interface. All final paper topics must be approved by me in **Week 5**.

- **Guidelines for those enrolled in LING 21820**: Your paper should be **8-10 pages** single-spaced, 12-point serif (Times New Roman/Computer Modern, whatever) font, 1-inch margins, etc. You will be required to submit a partial draft to me **during Week 7** so I can make sure you are on the right track.

- **Guidelines for those enrolled in LING 31820**: Your paper should be **10-15 pages** single-spaced, 12-point serif (Times New Roman/Computer Modern, whatever) font, 1-inch margins, etc. It is preferable that your paper be typeset using Latex.

Final submissions for the term paper will be due **Tuesday of Finals Week (March 15th)**.

Grading

Attendance and participation:	15%
Paper presentation(s):	20%
Midterm paper:	25%
Final paper:	40%

Academic Honesty

By now you are all familiar with the College's strict policies regarding plagiarism. Since this is a discussion-based class (on a rather broad subject), I hope and expect that themes from our class meetings will emerge in your submitted assignments. However, obvious instances of academic malpractice will not be tolerated and will be penalized accordingly. If you have any doubts about whether your work is your own, it is always safer to cite sources thoroughly and often.

Tentative schedule

This is a schedule that includes what I would like to cover if we had infinite time. Many of these readings will be shuffled around or made optional, depending on timing and your interests.

Week 1
Topics: Why do we need interfaces? What even is the morphology-syntax interface?
Readings:

- Aronoff, Mark. 2017. A fox knows many things but a hedgehog one big thing (Chapter 8). In *The Cambridge Handbook of Morphology*, eds. Andrew Hippisley & Gregory Stump.

- Julien, Marit. 2007. On the relation between morphology and syntax (Chapter 6). In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces*, eds. Gillian Ramchand & Charles Reiss.

- Siddiqi, Daniel. 2014. The morphology-syntax interface (Chapter 17). In *The Routledge Handbook of Syntax*, eds. Andrew Carnie, Yosuke Sato, & Daniel Siddiqi.

Week 2
Topics: Theories of morphology and syntax (and how they handle the interface)
Readings:

- Williams, Edwin. 2000. Three models of the morphology-syntax interface. In *Morphological Analysis in Comparison*, eds. Wolfgang U. Dressler, Oskar E. Pfeiffer, Markus A. Pöchtrager, John R. Rennison. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Halle, Morris & Alec Marantz. 1994. Some key features of Distributed Morphology. *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics* 21. 275-288.

- Embick, David & Rolf Noyer. 2007. Distributed Morphology and the syntax-morphology interface (Chapter 9). In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces*, eds. Gillian Ramchand & Charles Reiss.

- Ackema, Peter & Ad Neeleman. 2007. Morphology ≠ syntax (Chapter 10). In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces*, eds. Gillian Ramchand & Charles Reiss.

- Anderson, Stephen R. 2017. The role of morphology in Transformational Grammer (Chapter 21). In *The Cambridge Handbook of Morphology*, eds. Andrew Hippisley & Gregory Stump.

- Williams, Edwin. 2007. Dumping lexicalism (Chapter 11). In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces*, eds. Gillian Ramchand & Charles Reiss.

Week 3
Topics: Issues of argument structure and case
Readings:

- Nichols, Johanna. 1986. Head-marking and dependent-marking grammar. *Language* 62.1. 56-119.

- Bobaljik, Jonathan D. & Susi Wurmbrand. 2008. Case in GB/Minimalism. In *The Oxford Handbook of Case*, eds. Andrej L. Malchukov & Andrew Spencer.

- Butt, Miriam. 2008. Case in Lexical-Functional Grammar. In *The Oxford Handbook of Case*, eds. Andrej L. Malchukov & Andrew Spencer.

Week 4
Midterm papers due
Topics: Issues of argument structure and case, cont'd.
Readings:

- Spencer, Andrew. 2008. Case as a morphological phenomenon. In *The Oxford Handbook of Case*, eds. Andrej L. Malchukov & Andrew Spencer.

- Neeleman, Ad & Fred Weerman. 2008. Syntactic effects of morphological case. In *The Oxford Handbook of Case*, eds. Andrej L. Malchukov & Andrew Spencer.

- Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Michael Kenstowicz, 1-52. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

- Harley, Heidi. 2011. A minimalist approach to argument structure. In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*, ed. Cedric Boeckx.

- Harley, Heidi. 2008. On the causative construction. In *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*, ed. Shigeru Miyagawa.

- Folli, Raffaella & Heidi Harley. 2013. The syntax of argument structure: Evidence from Italian complex predicates. *Journal of Linguistics* 49. 93-125.

Week 5
Final paper topics must be approved by the end of the week
Topics: Morphosyntactic features, agreement, and syncretism
Readings:

- Baerman, Matthew. 2004. Directionality and (un)natural classes in syncretism. *Language* 80.4. 807-827.

- Corbett, Greville G. 1987. The morphology/syntax interface: Evidence from possessive adjectives in Slavonic. *Language* 63.2. 299-345.

- Kramer, Ruth. 2015. *The Morphosyntax of Gender*, Chapters 1 and 2. Oxford: OUP.

- Kramer, Ruth. 2016. Syncretism in paradigm function morphology and distributed morphology. In *Morphological metatheory*, eds. Daniel Siddiqi & Heidi Harley. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Konnelly, Lex & Elizabeth Cowper. 2020. Gender diversity and morphosyntax: An account of singular *they*. *Glossa* 5(1): 40. 1-19.

Week 6
Topics: Affix ordering and word formation
Readings:

- Harizanov, Boris. 2018. Word-formation at the syntax-morphology interface: Denominal adjectives in Bulgarian. *Linguistic Inquiry* 49.2. 283-333.

- Compton, Richard & Christine Pittman. 2010. Word-formation by phase in Inuit. *Lingua* 120. 2167-2192.

- Mithun, Marianne. Affix ordering: Motivation and interpretation (Chapter 7). In *The Cambridge Handbook of Morphology*, eds. Andrew Hippisley & Gregory Stump.

- Harley, Heidi. 2013. Getting morphemes in order: Merger, affixation, and head movement. In *Diagnosing Syntax*, eds. Lisa Lai-Sheng & Norbert Corver. Oxford: OUP.

- Georgieva, Ekaterina, Martin Salzmann, & Philipp Weisser. 2020. Negative verb clusters in Mari and Udmurt and why they require postsyntactic top-down word-formation. *NLLT*.

Week 7
Partial draft of final paper due for undergrad students
Topics: Compounding and noun incorporation
Readings:

- Harley, Heidi. 2009. Compounding in Distributed Morphology. In *The Oxford Handbook of Compounding*, eds. Rochelle Lieber & Pavol Štekauer.

- Johns, Alan. 2017. Noun incorporation. In *The Wiley Companion to Syntax*, eds. Martin Everaert & Henk van Riemsdijk.

- Massam, Diane. 2001. Pseudo noun incorporation in Niuean. *NLLT* 19.1. 153-197.

- Mithun, Marianne. 1984. The evolution of noun incorporation. *Language* 60.4. 847-894.

- Mithun, Marianne. 1986. On the nature of noun incorporation. *Language* 62.1. 32-37.

- Sadock, Jerrold. 1980. Noun incorporation in Greenlandic: A case of syntactic word formation. *Language* 56.2. 300-319.

- Dahlstrom, Amy. 2000. Morphosyntactic mismatches in Algonquian: Affixal predication and discontinuous verbs. In *CLS 36: The Panels*, eds. Arika Okrent & John P. Boyle.

Week 8
Topics: Polysynthesis
Readings:

- Murasugi, Kumiko. 2014. Noun incorporation, nonconfigurationality, and polysynthesis (Chapter 14). In *The Routledge Handbook of Syntax*, eds. Andrew Carnie, Yosuke Sato, & Daniel Siddiqi.

- Jelinek, Eloise. 1984. Empty categories, case, and configurationality. *NLLT* 2.1. 39-76.

- Baker, Mark C. 1996. *The polysynthesis parameter*, Chapters 1 and 2. Oxford: OUP.

- Baker, Mark C. 2006. On zero agreement and polysynthesis. In *Arguments and agreement*, Peter Ackema, P. Brandt, M. Schoorlemmer, and Fred Weerman, eds. Oxford: OUP.

- Bickel, Balthasar & Fernando Zúñiga. 2017. The 'word' in polysynthetic languages: Phonological and syntactic challenges. In *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*, eds. Michael Fortescue, Marianne Mithun, & Nicholas Evans.

Week 9
Topics: Polysynthesis cont'd, write-ins
Readings:

- Matissen, Johanna. Sub-types of polysynthesis. 2017. In *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*, eds. Michael Fortescue, Marianne Mithun, & Nicholas Evans.

- Sadock, Jerrold. 2017. The subjectivity of the notion of polysynthesis. In *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*, eds. Michael Fortescue, Marianne Mithun, & Nicholas Evans.

- Givón, Tom. 2017. Is polysynthesis a valid theoretical notion? The diachrony of complex verbs in Ute. In *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*, eds. Michael Fortescue, Marianne Mithun, & Nicholas Evans.

Finals Week
*Drop-in office hours on Monday 3/14 – Final papers due Tuesday 3/15***

Administrative Policies

Land Acknowledgment

As we study the morphosyntactic diversity of languages of the world (without which we'd have little to debate!), it is important that we acknowledge the ways that indigenous peoples and their languages have often figured in linguistic research without reaping any rewards. Our course meets on the ancestral lands of the Council of the Three Fires (*Niswi-mishkodewinan*), a confederacy including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa peoples. Other indigenous groups of Illinois include the Miami, Menominee, Sac, Fox, Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, and Illinois Nations.

Accommodations

I am committed to creating an inclusive and accessible classroom environment for all students, including those with visible and non-visible disabilities. Please write to me and we will agree on reasonable accommodations so that your educational needs can be met appropriately. There is no need to tell me of the reason for your accommodation request unless you feel it would be helpful. I will not require supporting materials from the Office of Student Disability Services unless significant changes to the course requirements are necessary.

COVID-related Policies

We will meet in-person as often as possible; however, we must all be prepared to move to an online meeting format depending on the status of the virus in Chicago and the university's guidelines. As you are aware, the first two weeks of the course will take place remotely via Zoom.

I recognize that the pandemic has placed an outsize burden on all of us, but I want to stress that this class will strive to maintain as great a sense of normalcy as possible. My general policy is to work with students to approve extensions and accommodations as needed; I only ask that you communicate with me *in advance* of deadlines so that we can make arrangements ahead of time. There will be no blanket acceptance of late or missing assignments or sporadic class attendance because of the pandemic.

There will not be a standing Zoom meeting for this course except on scheduled online days (e.g., the first two weeks of the course). My experience (as well as that of other instructors) has cast serious doubt on the quality of hybrid in-person/online classrooms, so

I expect you to make an effort to attend class in-person unless you have a compelling reason that you cannot (e.g., potential COVID exposure). In the event that you think you may have been exposed to COVID or have COVID symptoms, please inform me and the appropriate university officials (C19HealthReport@uchicago.edu).

Use of Technology in the Classroom

As in any discussion-based class, it is necessary to provide your classmates with your full and undivided attention. For this reason, laptops, tablets, and other devices should only be used to view assigned readings, although it is preferable if you bring printed copies with you to minimize unintended distractions. Please only use your devices to assist in your class participation. If this policy gets in the way of your requested accommodations or would otherwise impede your ability to fully participate, please get in touch with me.