Cognitive Science
FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY UW
INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY UW

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

Course syllabus

Course title	Modern syntax
Instructor(s)	prof. Adam Przepiórkowski
Contact details	Preferred contact: via the KAMPUS on-line learning platform. Office hours: Mondays 16:30–18:00, Faculty of Philosophy (Krakowskie Przedmieście 3), room 304 (by earlier appointment).
Affiliation	Faculty of Philosophy, University of Warsaw / Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences
Course format	seminar
Number of hours	30 hours
Number of ECTS credits	**3 ECTS credits= 75 hours work load:** – 30 hours – attendance – 25 hours – reading – 20 hours – homeworks
Brief course description	The aim of this course is to present the dominant modern syntactic theory, Minimalism (or Minimalist Program; Noam Chomsky), in comparison to other important linguistic theories. Of these, we will look at basic Formal Grammars (also usually associated with Noam Chomsky), Categorial Grammars (stemming from the work of Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz), and Dependency Grammars (originating in the work of Lucien Tesnière, but its modern and computationally-oriented version – Universal Dependencies – will be given priority in the course). If time allows, we will also have a look at modern constraint-based theories which build on these three general approaches, namely, Lexical Functional Grammar (Joan Bresnan and Ron Kaplan) and Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (Carl Pollard and Ivan Sag).
Full course description	The course is devoted to contemporary syntactic theories, with emphasis on the currently dominant theory: the Minimalist Program (or Minimalism in short). To this end, this year we will use the 2017 textbook “Syntax: An Introduction to Minimalism” by Elly van Gelderen. When going through the textbook, we will compare the theoretical mechanisms and analyses to those of other syntactic theories, starting with the basic Formal Grammars (especially, Context-Free Grammars), as

	defined in early work by Noam Chomsky. We will also look at some depth at two very different and very important approaches to syntax which were originally developed around mid-20th century, but still popular and actively developed today. The first of these – Categorial Grammar – has its origins in the work of Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (of 1930s). The second is Dependency Grammar, first fully developed in Lucien Tesnière's "Éléments de Syntaxe Structurale" (1959). During the course, we will also discuss the important distinction between model-theoretic and generative-enumerative syntactic frameworks (Pullum and Scholz 2001). Chomskian approaches (from Formal Grammars to Minimalism) and Categorial Grammar are prototypical examples of generative-enumerative frameworks, and we will consider a very different way of doing syntax, namely, model-theoretic. If the time allows, we will look at at least one of such model-theoretic theories: Lexical Functional Grammar or Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar. Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG; Bresnan and Kaplan 1982, Dalrymple 2001, Bresnan et al. 2016, Dalrymple et al. 2019) is a theory proposed in late 1970s and early 1980s, and actively developed since then. LFG combines elements of Formal Grammar and Dependency Grammar and is the host formalism of many linguistic analyses of various phenomena from typologically diverse languages. Due to the high level of formalisation, there exist computer implementations of various grammars (including for English and Polish) which make it possible to automatically verify analyses proposed by linguists. An even more highly formalised model-theoretic approach is the Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG; Pollard and Sag 1987, 1994; Sag, Wasow and Bender 2003), which also boasts of a number of implemented grammars. Where possible, we various approaches to syntax will be illustrated with a phenomenon that is both textually frequent and extremely controversial, namely, coordination.
Learning outcomes	As a result of the course, students will get to know: – the basics of diverse contemporary syntactic theories (K_W01, K_W02, K_K01) – various syntactic approaches to coordination (K_W02, K_K01) Students will also learn to: – understand analyses of various syntactic phenomena within a range of syntactic theories (K_U01, K_U08, K_K02) – develop syntactic analyses of simple phenomena in selected syntactic theories (K_U08, K_K02) Because of the partly interactive nature of the course, students will also enhance their ability to: – concisely articulate arguments concerning syntactic structures (K_U07) – listen to – and evaluate – arguments of others (K_U07)

Learning activities and teaching methods	The course will be partly lecture and partly discussion/tutorial. Typically, we will learn the basic mechanisms of a given syntactic theory (reading at home and/or lecture) and we will try to apply these to various constructions, especially to coordination (discussion/tutorial).
List of topics/classes and bibliography	See *Full course description* for list of topics. Bibliography: Ajdukiewicz K., 1935: Die syntaktische Konnexität, Studia Philosophica, 1, s. 1–27. Borsley R.D., Börjars K. (eds.) 2011: Non-Transformational Syntax: Formal and Explicit Models of Grammar, Blackwell, Oxford. Bresnan J. (ed.) 1982: The Mental Representation of Grammatical Relations, MIT Press Series on Cognitive Theory and Mental Representation, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. Bresnan J., Asudeh A., Toivonen I., Wechsler S., 2016: Lexical-Functional Syntax, Blackwell Textbooks in Linguistics, Wiley-Blackwell, 2nd edition. Chomsky N., 1956: Three models for the description of language, IRE Transactions on Information Theory, 2(3), 113–124. Chomsky N., 1957: Syntactic Structures, Mouton, Hague. Chomsky N. 1995: The Minimalist Program, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. Dalrymple M., 2001: Lexical Functional Grammar, Academic Press, San Diego, CA. Dalrymple M., Lowe J., Mycock L., 2019: The Oxford Reference Guide to Lexical Functional Grammar. Oxford University Press. Patejuk A., Przepiórkowski A., 2018: From Lexical Functional Grammar to Enhanced Universal Dependencies: Linguistically Informed Treebanks of Polish. Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences. Pollard C., Sag I.A., 1987: Information-Based Syntax and Semantics, Volume 1: Fundamentals, CSLI Publications, Stanford, CA. Pollard C., Sag I.A., 1994: Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar, Chicago University Press / CSLI Publications, Chicago, IL. Pullum G.K., Scholz B.C., 2001: On the Distinction between Model-Theoretic and Generative-Enumerative Syntactic Frameworks, in P. de Groote, G. Morrill, C. Retore: LACL 2001, LNAI 2099, pp. 17–43.

	Przepiórkowski A., Kupść A., Marciniak M., Mykowiecka A., 2002: Formalny opis języka polskiego: Teoria i implementacja, Akademicka Oficyna Wydawnicza EXIT, Warsaw. Sag I.A., Wasow T., Bender E.M., 2003: Syntactic Theory: A Formal Introduction, CSLI Publications, Stanford, CA, 2nd edition. Steedman M., 1996: Surface Structure and Interpretation, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. Tesnière L., 1959: Éléments de Syntaxe Structurale, Klincksieck, Paryż. Van Gelderen E., 2017: Syntax: An Introduction to Minimalism, John Benjamins, Amsterdam / Philadelphia.
Assessment methods and criteria	This year assessment is based on homeworks, to be given after each class (often together with reading assignments). They will be relatively easy (they will often simply check that the student understands the assigned text), and they will be mostly marked each with a + or a –. At least 75% must be marked with a + to pass the course, at least 80% to get a 3, …, at least 95% to get 5. The exceptional 5! mark will be awarded to students who have at least 95% homeworks marked with a + and additionally do their homeworks especially well and/or are especially active in class.
Attendance rules	As this course covers the state of the art in syntactic theories, and much information will be given in class, attendance is obligatory. Up to two unexcused absences are permitted (but definitely not recommended). Missing more than 3 classes for whatever reason results in failing the course.
Prerequisites	–
Academic honesty	Students must respect the principles of academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism (including copying work from other students, internet or other sources) are serious violations that are punishable and instructors are required to report all cases to the administration.
Remarks	Any remarks you would like students to know