The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
Second Term, 2022-2023

Course Title: LING6903 **Syntactic Theory (3 Units)**	
Description:	

This course introduces the Chomskyan generative syntax to RPG students. It provides students with an overview on the Principles & Parameters' model and the Minimalist Program. In particular, the most important concepts in the latest version of the Minimalist Program such as *Merge*, *Agree*, *Move*, *Match*, *Minimal Search*, *Probe-Goal*, *Phases*, *Labeling*, *Workspace* will be presented in a detailed way.

List of Topics, Content, highlighting fundamental concepts

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
X'-Theory	- X'-theory (Why? How?) - Projections (VP, NP, TP, CP)
Theta Theory	- Theta role assignment - Argument structure - θ-criterion
Case Theory	- Abstract/Structural Case - Government; Spec-head agreement - Case filter - DP hypothesis - VP-shell hypothesis: *v*P
Binding Theory	- Binding conditions A, B, C - Anaphora, pronouns, referential expressions - Control vs. Raising
A-Movement	- A-movement/NP-movement - Burzio's generalization - Raising verbs, passivization - ECM verbs, unaccusatives, ergatives, unergatives - VP-subject-internal hypothesis
A'-Movement	- Head-movement - A'-movement, A'-positions, A'-dependency *Wh*-movement, relativization, topicalization
Locality	- Subjacency, bounding nodes - Island constraints, island types (strong, weak) - Empty Category Principle (ECP), intermediate traces - Condition on Extraction Domain (CED) - Relativized Minimality
Logical Form	- Quantifiers: ∃, ∀ - Quantifier Raising (QR) and LF-movement - Arguments for covert *wh*-movement: selectional restriction, crossover effects (weak, strong)
The Minimalist Philosophy	- Beyond Explanatory Adequacy; - The "third" factor; - Optimal design, etc.

The Minimalist Architecture	- Lexical Array; Sub-Array; - Computational System of Human Language - Spell-Out, Transfer - PF and LF, etc.
Core Minimalist Conditions	- Legibility Condition; - Strong Minimalist Thesis; - Inclussiveness Condition; - Interpretability Condition; - Extension Condition;
Minimalist Operations	- Merge (External Merge, Internal Merge); - Move; Agree; - Label, etc. - Phase; Phase Impenetrability Condition;

Learning outcomes

After completing this course, research students should be able to:

1. Understand the <u>major motivations</u> for the shifting from the Principles & Parameters (P&P) model to the Minimalist Program (MP).
2. Understand the logical relationship among different minimalist conditions (cf. "concepts" listed above).
3. Understand and <u>apply the essential operations</u> in the MP model, such as *Merge*, *Agree* and *Move*.
4. <u>Re-evaluate</u> the basic concepts proposed in the P&P model, such as locality constraints (Subjacency, ECP, CED), movement, binding, cyclicity, etc., in terms of the Minimalist criteria.
5. Make a clear distinction between theoretical tools in the P&P framework and those in the MP.
6. Make a clear distinction between Chomsky's initial proposals for each concept and the alternatives suggested by other researchers.
7. Understand the conceptual development of the Phase Theory and the Labeling Algorithm.
8. Solve certain problems with minimalist devices.

Assessment scheme:

Description	*Points*
Assignment 1	20
Assignment 2	20
Assignment 3	40
Reading report 1	10
Reading report 2	10
Total=	100

Grade Descriptions:

Grade	Overall Course
A	**Outstanding** performance on all learning outcomes. (i) Demonstrate **thorough mastery** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining **all** the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). (ii) Demonstrate the ability to apply the analytical techniques introduced in the course to familiar and **un**familiar linguistic phenomena in familiar and **un**familiar languages. (iii) Demonstrate the ability to verify different theoretical hypotheses with **solid** arguments as well as **coherent** argumentation. (iv) Has the ability to express the knowledge or synthesis of ideas in a **clear** and **cogent** way. (v) Has **extensive** reading related to the course.
A-	**Generally** outstanding performance on all (or **almost** all) learning outcomes. (i) Demonstrate **substantial command** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining **almost** the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). (ii) Demonstrate the ability to apply the analytical techniques introduced in the course to familiar and **less** familiar linguistic phenomena in familiar and **some un**familiar languages. (iii) Demonstrate the ability to verify different theoretical hypotheses in a **logical** and **persuasive** way. (iv) Has the ability to express the knowledge or synthesis of ideas with **clarity** and **accuracy**. (v) Has a **certain amount** of reading related to the course.
B	(i) Demonstrate **general and sufficient command** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining **most** the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). (ii) Demonstrate the ability to apply the analytical techniques introduced in the course to **most** (but **not necessarily all**) familiar linguistic phenomena in familiar and **some un**familiar languages. (iii) Demonstrate the ability to verify different theoretical hypotheses in a **logical** and **comprehensive** way. (iv) Has the ability to express the knowledge or synthesis of ideas in a **satisfactory** and **unambiguously** was. (v) Has **basic** reading related to the course.
C	(i) Demonstrate **general command** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining **some** the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). (ii) Demonstrate the ability to apply the analytical techniques introduced in the course to **some** familiar linguistic phenomena in familiar languages. (iii) Has the ability to express the separate pieces of knowledge in an **unambiguously** was. (v) Has **some** reading related to the course.
D	**Barely satisfactory performance** on a number of learning outcomes. (i) Demonstrate **a partial command** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining **some** the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). (ii) Demonstrate the ability to apply the analytical techniques introduced in the course to **some simple** linguistic phenomena in familiar languages. (iii) Has the ability to state the knowledge in **simple terms**. (v) Has **very limited** reading related to the course.

F	(i) Demonstrate **little or no evidence of command** of principles and subject matter in the course required for attaining the course objectives (cf. Learning outcomes & List of topics). OR (ii) **failure** to meet specified assessment requirements.

Learning resources for students

1. A detailed course handout will be provided for each lecture.
2. The general structure of the handout is given under "Topic" below (cf. Course schedule).
3. Basic readings are indicated under "Recommanded readings" below (cf. Course schedule).
   Extended reading references will be specified on the handout related to each topic.
4. Useful textbooks and reference books are listed here:

   Adger, David (2003) *Core Syntax*. Oxford University Press.

   Boeckx, Cedric (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism.* Oxford University Press.

   Bošković, Zeljko & Howard Lasnik (2007). *Minimalist Syntax: The Essential Readings.* Blackwell Publishing.

   Haegeman, Liliane (1994). *Introduction to Government & Binding Theory* (Second edition), Blackwell Publishing.

   Hornstein Norbert, Jairo Nunes & Kleanthes Grohmann (2005) *Understanding Minimalism.* Cambridge University Press.

   Ouhalla, Jamal (1999). *Introducing Transformational Grammar: From Principles and Parameters to Minimalism* (Second edition), Arnold Publishers.

If you read French,

   Rouveret, Alain (2015) *Arguments Minimalistes. Une présentation du Programme Minimaliste de Noam Chomsky*. ENS Éditions.

5. Chomsky's recent lectures on the latest development of the Minimalist Program:

2021.4.9 **Genuine Explanations**. Plenary talk given at WCCFL 29, Arizona University. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6SbPKmVNVQ)

2021.4.2 **Minimalism: where we are now, and where we are going.** Lecture given at the 161st meeting of Linguistic Society of Japan. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4F9NSVVVuw)

2021.2.24 **The Minimalist Program in 2021**. Lecture given at The Linguistics Association of Allameh Tabataba'i Univertisity. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1FCMElZI4k)

2019. **The UCLA lectures**. Lectures given at the department of linguistics at UCLA. (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKHiqiijo0ErkJS-R7vkPng/videos), handout (https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/005485).

Course schedule (subject to adjustment)

Week	Date	Topics	Recommended readings
1	Jan 9	**- X'-Theory**	Haegeman (1994): ch. 2 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 2, 6
2	Jan 16	**- Theta Theory** **- Case Theory (I)**: - morphological case, abstract Case, - Case assignment, government	Haegeman (1994): ch. 3 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 7, 8
	Jan 23	******* No Class ***********	Lunar New Year break
3	Jan 30	**- Case Theory (II)**: - ECM , raising - DP hypothesis **- Movement Theory (I)**: A-movement **- Binding Theory (I)**: Principles A, B, C,	Haegeman (1994): ch. 6 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 4, 10
4	Feb 6	**- Binding Theory (II)**: control, PRO **-Movement Theory (II)**: A'-movement **- Locality (I)**: Subjacency	Haegeman (1994): ch. 4 Ouhalla (1999): ch. 9
5	Feb 13	**- Locality (II)**: ECP, CED **-Logical Form (I)**: - QR, crossover	Haegeman (1994): ch. 4, 5, Ouhalla (1999): ch. 9, 10
6	Feb 20	**- Logical Form (II)**: (*if time permits*) - Reconstruction, intervention effects **- The Minimalist Program (I)** - Minimalist innovations - Design of Language Faculty - Strong Minimalist Thesis - The "third factor" - Uniformity Principle	Chomsky, Noam (2000). Minimalist inquiries: the framework. *Step by step*. R. Martin, D. Michaels & J. Uriagereka eds., Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, p. 89-155. Chomsky, Noam (2001). Derivation by phase, in *Ken Hale: a Life in Language*, M. Kenstowicz eds., Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, p. 1-52. Chomsky, Noam (2005). Three factors in language design. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36, p. 1-22.
7	Feb 27	**- The Minimalist Program (II)** - Lexicon, numeration, Merge - The MP Modal in *BEA* - Difference between Narrow Syntax and Σ **- Agree (I)** - Feature valuation, Agree, Matching, - Activity condition	Adger, David (2003) *Core Syntax*. OUP. (Ch.5 Functional Categories I-TP) Bošković, Zeljko & Howard Lasnik (2007). *Minimalist Syntax: The Essential Readings*. Blackwell Publishing. (ch. 7 *Existential Constructions*) Chomsky, Noam (2001). Derivation by phase, in *Ken Hale: a Life in Language*, M. Kenstowicz eds., Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, p. 1-52.
8	Mar 6	**- Agree (II)** - Conditions on Agree - Subject-verb agreement - Case on the object - Edge condition - Completeness condition - ɸ-features, - Defective Intervention Constraint	
9	Mar 13	**- Agree (III)** - Completeness condition - ɸ-features, - Defective Intervention Constraint	

10	Mar 20	**- Phase Theory (I)** - Arguments in favor of the existence of phases - Features on phase heads - Uninterpretable features - Movement triggering feature - Phasal movement	Bošković, Zeljko & Howard Lasnik (2007). *Minimalist Syntax: The Essential Readings*. Blackwell Publishing. (ch. 2.3 *Locality*; 2.4 *Recent Developments: Phases*) Chomsky, Noam (2001). Derivation by phase, in *Ken Hale: a Life in Language*, M. Kenstowicz eds., Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, p. 1-52.
11	Mar 27	**- Phase Theory (II)** - Phase Impenetrability Condition (First version: *MI*) - Reconstruction and *v**P phase - Strong phase vs. weak phase - Phase Impenetrability Condition (Second version: *DbP*)- Phase and locality - Edge Feature - Feature Inheritance Hypothesis	Chomsky, Noam (2008). On phases. *Foundational Issues in Linguistic Theory*. R. Freidin, C. Otero & M.-L. Zubizarreta, eds., Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.
12	Apr 3	**- Phase Theory (III)** - Inheritance of φ-features - *Wh*-dependency - Strong island (subject, adjunct); multiple spell out; late insertion. - Properties of phases	Chomsky, Noam (2012). Forward. *Phases*, A. Gallego ed., Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, p. 1-7. Citko, Barbara (2014) *Phase Theory: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press. (ch. 2 *Introducing phases*) Legate, Julie (2003). Some interface properties of the phase. *Linguistic Inquiry* 34, p. 506-515. Nunes, Jairo & Juan Uriagereka (2000). Cyclicity and extraction domains. In *Syntax* 3.1, p. 20-43. Uriagereka, Juan (1999). Multiple Spell-Out. In *Working Minimalism*, ed. S. D. Epstein and N. Hornstein, 251-282. Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press.
	April 10	******* No Class ************	Easter Monday
13	April 17	**Labeling (*if we still have some time…*)** - Labeling algorithm - Argument: Donati (2006) - Case 1: Small clause (Moro 2000) - Case 2: Predicate – internal subject construction - Case 3: Successive-cyclic *wh*-movement - Case 4: Indirect questions - Case 5: Subject-Predicate case - Case 6: Coordination	Chomsky, Noam (2013). Problems of projection, *Lingua* 130, p. 33-49. Chomsky, Noam (2015). Problems of projection: extensions. Chomsky, N., Gallego & Ott. (2019). Generative Grammar and the Faculty of Language: Insights, Questions, and Challenges. Chomsky, N. (2019). Some Puzzling Foundational Issues: The Reading Program. Chomsky, N. (2020) Puzzles About Phases.

Teachers' or TA's contact details

Professor/Instructor	
Name:	Prof. Victor Junnan Pan
Office Location:	Room G15, G/F Leung Kau Kui Building
Email:	victorjunnanpan [at] cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Venue:	Monday 09:30 - 12:15, William M W Mong Eng Bldg 406
Website:	http://ling.cuhk.edu.hk/p_victor.php
Other information:	Language of instruction: English
Office hours:	By appointment

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 statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

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