

ENG 570: TRENDS AND TOPICS IN LINGUISTICS

— The Grammar of Non-Finite Root Constructions —

Linguistics Section, Department of English Studies, University of Cyprus

Spring Semester 2007: Tuesday & Friday, 16.30-18.00 – Room A 108

www.punksinscience.org/kleanthes/courses/UCY07S/TTL

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DESCRIPTION

As the subtitle of this course suggests, we will investigate the grammatical properties of non-finite clauses used in root or matrix, i.e. non-embedded, contexts. A primary example would be the so-called root infinitive (e.g., from *Mad* magazine: “What, me worry?”), but similar observations may be applied to participial/gerundive clauses (“Him worrying?”), and quite possibly to subjunctives in languages that lack infinitives (such as non-embedded *na*-clauses in Modern Greek). In the course of the semester, we will look at the syntax and semantics involved, consider the pragmatics where relevant, and take into consideration adult use across languages (which have not received much attention in the literature) as well as the rather well-studied child phenomenon that has been dubbed the root (or optional) infinitive stage.

ASSESSMENT

Regular attendance is strongly suggested! Besides the class lectures, there will be:

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|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. one class presentation | <i>30% of the final grade</i> | May 8 (all presentations) |
| 2. one research abstract | <i>20% of the final grade</i> | March 30 (draft) / May 1 |
| 3. one term paper | <i>50% of the final grade</i> | May 24 (final version!!!) |

Ideally your class presentation will connect to your research abstract and your term paper. The abstract may not exceed 1,000 words and should be of such quality that it could be submitted to a conference. The term paper should be around 5–7,000 words in length and constitute either original research or a literature review. We will discuss further details soon.

READING

There are two readers with all the major articles we’ll read, one on syntax and one on acquisition, available from me for CY£ 10 total. Every student should have a copy. Further references and course handouts might be distributed in class; see also the course homepage.

RESERVE

The following is a categorized list of the books available for short-term loan from the library. Browse through these works for background information, project ideas, and further readings.

Syntax

1. Baltin, M.R. & Collins, C. (eds.) 2003. *The Handbook of Contemporary Syntactic Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
2. Cinque, G. 1999. *Adverbs and Functional Heads: A Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
3. Guéron, J. & Lecarme, J. (eds.) 2004. *The Syntax of Time*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
4. Haegeman, L. (ed.) 1997. *Elements of Grammar: Handbook of Generative Syntax*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
5. Mensching, G. 2000. *Infinitive Constructions with Specified Subjects: A Syntactic Analysis of the Romance Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. Ormazabal, J. 1995. *The Syntax of Complementation: On the Connection of Syntactic Structure and Selection*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs.
7. Schmitt, C. 1996. *Aspect and the Syntax of Noun Phrases*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park.

Semantics

8. Chierchia, G. 1995. *The Dynamics of Meaning: Anaphora, Presupposition, and the Theory of Grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
9. Giorgi, A. & Pianesi, F. 1997. *Tense and Aspect: From Semantics to Morphosyntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10. Klein, W. 1994. *Time in Language*. London: Routledge.
11. Partee, B.H., Hajičová, E. & Sgall, P. 2000. *Topic-Focus Articulation, Tripartite Structures, and Semantic Content*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
12. Rooth, M. 1985. *Association with Focus*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
13. Smith, C. 1997². *The Parameter of Aspect*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Acquisition

14. Guasti, M.-T. 2002. *Language Acquisition: The Growth of Grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
15. Lasser, I. 1997. *Finiteness in Adult and Child German*. Doctoral dissertation, City University of New York.

READERS

Below you find an alphabetical list of all the papers contained in the two course readers, the reader on Adult Syntax and the one on Child Syntax. (Note that the readers themselves are chronologically ordered, with articles roughly in the order we discuss them.) I hope to cover most, if not all, of these. Please note that the reserve readings are also strongly suggested as background reading and/or sources for further discussion, details, and research ideas.

ADULT SYNTAX

- Akmajian, Adrian (1983). Sentence types and the form-function fit. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 2: 1-23.
- Etxepare, Ricardo & Kleanthes K. Grohmann (2006). Temporal and aspectual variation in adult root infinitives. In Jacques Moeschler, Louis de Saussure & Genoveva Puskás (eds.), *Recent Advances in the Syntax and Semantics of Tense, Mood and Aspect*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Fillmore, Charles J., Paul Kay & Mary C. O'Connor (1988). Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions. *Language* 64: 501-538.
- Grohmann, Kleanthes K. & Ricardo Etxepare (2003). Root infinitives: A comparative view. *Probus* 15: 201-236.
- Grohmann, Kleanthes K. & Ricardo Etxepare (2006). Properties of infinitival structures in Romance. In Jenny Doetjes & Paz González (eds.), *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2004: Selected Papers from Going Romance, Leiden, 9-11 December 2004*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 171-196.
- Hwang, Kyu-Hong (1997). The English present subjunctive and case checking of its subject. *Studies in Generative Grammar* 7: 93-123.
- Kučanda, Dubravko (2000). Infinitive subjects or subjectless infinitives? *Suvremena lingvistika* 49-50: 81-97.
- Lambrech, Knud (1990). "What, me worry?" – 'Mad Magazine sentences' revisited. *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*: 215-228.
- Schütze, Carson T. (1997). INFL forms and features: An English case study. Section 5.2 of *INFL in Child and Adult Language: Agreement, Case and Licensing*, doctoral dissertation. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Schütze, Carson T. (2003). When is a verb not a verb? *Nordlyd* 31.2 – *Proceedings of the 19th Scandinavian Conference of Linguistics*: 405-415.
- Tang, Sze-Wing (2005). A theory of licensing in English syntax and its applications. *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 5: 1-25.

CHILD SYNTAX

- Avram, Larisa (2002). Accounts of the optional infinitive stage. Chapter 4.2 of *An Introduction to Language Acquisition from a Generative Perspective*. Bukarest: Editura Universității din București.
- Boser, Katharina, Barbara Lust, Lynn Santelmann & John Whitmann (1992). The syntax of CP and V2 in early child German (ECG): The strong continuity hypothesis. *Proceedings of NELS 23*: 51-65.
- Davidson, Lisa & Matthew Goldrick (2003). Tense, agreement and defaults in child Catalan: An optimality theoretic analysis. In Silvina Montrul & Francisco Ordóñez (eds.), *Linguistic Theory and Language Development in Hispanic Languages: Papers from the 5th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium and the 4th Conference on the Acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press, 193-211.
- Deen, Kamil Ud & Nina Hyams (2006). The morphosyntax of mood in early grammar with special reference to Swahili. *First Language 26*: 67-102.
- Gavruseva, Elena (2003). Aktionsart, aspect, and the acquisition of finiteness in early child grammar. *Linguistics 41*: 723-755.
- Gordishevsky, Galina & Sergey Avrutin (2003). Subject and object omission in child Russian. *Proceedings of IATL 19* [downloadable from <http://atar.mscc.huji.ac.il/english/IATL/19>].
- Hoekstra, Teun & Nina Hyams (1998). Aspects of root infinitives. *Lingua 106*: 81-112.
- Hyams, Nina (2002). Clausal structure in child Greek: A reply to Varlokosta, Vainikka and Rohrbacher and a reanalysis. *The Linguistic Review 19*: 225-269.
- Hyams, Nina (2005). Child non-finite clauses and the mood-aspect connection: Evidence from child Greek. In Roumyana Slabakova & Paula Kempchinsky (eds.), *Aspectual Inquiries*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 293-315.
- Ingram, David & William Thompson (1996). Early syntactic acquisition in German: Evidence for the modal hypothesis. *Language 72*: 97-120.
- Phillips, Colin (1995). Syntax at age two: Cross-linguistic differences. *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics 26 – Papers on Language Processing and Acquisition*: 225-282.
- Poeppl, David & Kenneth Wexler (1993). The Full Competence Hypothesis of clause structure in early German. *Language 69*: 1-33.
- Prévost, Philippe (2004). The semantic and aspectual properties of child L2 root infinitives. In Philippe Prévost & Johanne Paradis (eds.), *The Acquisition of French in Different Contexts: Focus on Functional Categories*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 305-331.
- Rizzi, Luigi (1993/1994). Some notes on linguistic theory and language development: The case of root infinitives. *Language Acquisition 3*: 371-393.
- Tran, Jennie (2005). Word order and verb inflection in English-speaking children's L2 acquisition of German V2. *University of Hawai'i Working Papers in Linguistics 36*: 1-35.
- Tsakali, Vina & Kenneth Wexler (2003). Why children omit clitics in some languages but not in others: New evidence from Greek. *Proceedings of GALA 2003*, vol. 2.
- Wexler, Kenneth (1994). Optional infinitives, head-movement and the economy of derivations. In David Lightfoot & Norbert Hornstein (eds.), *Verb Movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 305-350.
- Wijnen, Frank, Masja Kempen & Steven Gillis (2001). Root infinitives in Dutch early child language: An effect of input? *Journal of Child Language 28*: 629-660.