

ENG 569: TOPICS IN ENGLISH SYNTAX

Linguistics Section • Department of English Studies • University of Cyprus

Fall Semester 2009: Tuesdays & Fridays, 13.30 – 15.00 @ Room A 108

www.punksinscience.org/kleanthes/courses/UCY09F/TES/index.htm

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DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will look at a number of particular grammatical phenomena, primarily (but not exclusively) from English, under theoretical considerations — and consider specific theoretical ideas by illustrating them with empirical evidence. This symbiotic *modus operandi* will orient itself to the second half of a textbook used previously by most of you: *Understanding Minimalism*. After a recap of the most salient aspects of any minimalist approach to natural language syntax, we will cover issues such as minimality and locality, phrase structure and linearization, binding theory, and then examine formal features and their role in syntactic computations, all the way up to the packaging of derivations themselves, namely, the most current version(s) of Phase Theory and alternatives.

ASSESSMENT

Regular attendance is strongly advised! Besides the class lectures, you will be graded as follows:

1. two short **quizzes** *20% of the final grade* unannounced (in-class)
2. **small** set of exercises *30% of the final grade* October 23 (by email)
3. **large** set of exercises *50% of the final grade* December 21 (by email)
4. presence & active **participation** in class throughout (± x grade points)

The exercises come from the book and will be assigned to individual students or, if desired, pairs. The “small set” are just a few, the “large set” will include revised solutions to the small set plus additional, and possibly more challenging, exercises because they come from later chapters in HNG.

I will prepare a list of all exercises in HNG with my assessment of difficulty levels (easy, interesting, and challenging), and every student/pair will get their own set to tackle throughout the semester — ideally in a balanced way, but also giving students the option to choose to some degree.

READING

There’s the textbook that every student should have a copy of because we’ll be using it extensively. Plus, all the exercises are in it as well. If you don’t have a copy, Moufflon Bookshop should still do.

Norbert Hornstein, Jairo Nunes & Kleanthes K. Grohmann. 2006. *Understanding Minimalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [from now on **HNG**, or informally: “the red book” ☺]

Apart from HNG, you should really make an effort reading beyond the textbook presentation! The book has plenty of references, and others will come up in class, so the more you read, the better you’ll be able to cope with the material (and finding answers to the exercises).