

ENGL 5337: TOPICS IN LINGUISTICS
The Syntax and Semantics of Noun Modifiers

- Class time: T/R, from 11:00 to 12:20 AM (from January 19th to May 8th)
- Location: English/Philosophy Rm 360
- Instructor: Dr. Min-Joo Kim
- Office: English/Philosophy Rm 480 (East Wing of the English/Philosophy Building)
- Office hours: Tue & Thurs 12:30-1:30 PM (or by appointment)
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I. Overview on the Course

A. Course Description

Noun-modifying (or adnominal) expressions such as adjective (ADJ) phrases and relative clauses (RCs) are presumably not required by grammar. Yet their syntax and semantics provide an important probe into the internal structure of noun phrase (NP). In this course, we will examine the syntax and semantics of adjectival noun modifiers in several unrelated languages and learn about various theories that have been proposed to capture their universal properties such as Cinque 2010, Larson 1998, and Svenonius 2008. To this end, we will survey various types of noun modifiers in English and other languages and read some classics and some recent work on ADJs, RCs, and NP structure. Along the way, we will address some general questions about the nature of lexical categories and the mapping between the form and the meaning of noun modifiers. Students taking this class are expected to complete the reading assignments in a timely manner and to participate actively in class discussions. Furthermore, they must (i) complete several homework assignments; (ii) keep a language journal on the syntax and semantics of noun modifiers of a relatively understudied language; (iii) write a term-paper on a topic that is chosen in consultation with the instructor; and (iv) make an in-class presentation on their term-paper at the end of the semester.

B. Textbooks

Required textbook:

Cinque, G. (2010) *The Syntax of Adjectives: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Additional reading material:

Bolinger, D. (1967) 'Adjectives in English: Attribution and Predication'. *Lingua*, 18: 1-34.

Cinque, G. (2008) 'Two types of non-restrictive relatives'. In O. Bonami & P. Cabredo Hofherr (eds.), *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics 7*, CSSP, 99-137.

Isac, D. (2003) 'Restrictive relative clauses vs. restrictive Adjectives: an asymmetry within the class of modifiers.' In A. M. Di Scilluo (ed.), *Asymmetry in Grammar: Volume 1: Syntax and Semantics*. Amsterdam, Holland: John Benjamins.

Huddleston, R. and G. K. Pullum. (2005) *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Larson, R. K. (1998) 'Events and modification in nominals'. In D. Strolovitch and A. Lawson (eds.), *Proceedings from Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT) VIII*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 145-168.

Partee, B. H. (1995). 'Lexical semantics and compositionality'. In G. Lila and M. Liberman (eds.), *An Invitation to Cognitive Science I: Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 311-360.

Sproat, R. and C. Shih. (1990) 'The Cross-Linguistics Distribution of Adjectival Ordering Restrictions'. In C. Georgopoulos and R. Ishihara (eds.), *Interdisciplinary Approaches to Language: Essays in Honor of S-Y. Kuroda*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 565-593.

Svenonius, P. (2008) 'The position of adjectives and other phrasal modifiers in the decomposition of DP'.

In C. Kennedy and L. McNally (eds.), *Adjectives and Adverbs: Syntax, Semantics, and Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press, 16-42.
Wang, L., E. McCready & B. Reese. (2006) 'Nominal appositives in context'. In M. T. Temkin Martínez, A. Alcázar & R. M. Hernández (eds.), *Proceedings of WECOL 33*, 411-423.

Suggested reading material:

Alexiadou, A., P. Law, A. Meinunger, and C. Wilder. (2000) *The Syntax of Relative Clauses*. Amsterdam, Holland: John Benjamins.
Bouchard, D. (2002) *Adjectives, Number and Interfaces: Why Languages Vary?* Amsterdam: North-Holland.
Dixon, R. M. W. (2004). 'Adjective classes in typological perspective'. In Dixon, R. M. W. and A. Y. Aikhenvald (eds), *Adjective Classes: A Cross-Linguistic Typology*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1-49.
Kennedy, C. To appear. 'Adjectives.' In Russell, G. and D. Graff Fara (eds.), *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Language*. UK: Routledge Publishing.
Greenberg, J. H. (1963) 'Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements'. In J. H. Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of Language. Report of a Conference Held at Dobbs Ferry, NY, April 13-15, 1961*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 73-113.
Larson, R. K. and F. Marušić. (2004) 'On indefinite pronoun structures with APs: reply to Kishimoto'. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 35: 268-287.
Larson, R. K. and N. Takahashi. (2007) 'Order and interpretation in prenominal relative Clauses'. In M. Kelepir and B. Oztu (eds.), *Proceedings of the Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics II*. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics, 54. Cambridge, MA: MITWPL, 101-120.
Ramaglia, F. (2010) *Adjectives at the Syntax-semantics Interface. Studies in Generative Grammar*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
Siegel, M. (1976) *Capturing the Adjective*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Massachusetts-Amherst.
Sprout, R. and C. Shih. (1988) 'Prenominal Adjectival Ordering in English and Mandarin'. In *Proceedings of NELS 18*. Amherst, MA: GLSA, 465-489.

C. Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- to identify various noun modifiers of various languages including unfamiliar ones;
- to accurately describe their morpho-syntactic and semantic properties;
- to understand and critically evaluate some representative theoretical analyses of noun modifiers;
- to formulate plausible hypotheses to explain cross-linguistic as well as language-specific adjectival noun modification phenomena.

D. Criteria for assessments

Assessment category	Percentage of final grade
1. Attendance	5%
2. Participation	10%
3. Homework assignments	15% (5 x 3% = 15%)
4. Language journal	20%
5. Proposal for the final term paper	5%
6. Final term-paper	30%
7. Presentation on the term paper	15%

Total	100%
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II. Course Policies

A. Basic Policies

- In order to earn a passing grade, a student must successfully complete **all** course requirements.
- All written assignments including proposals and papers are due **at class**, in the form of a **hard copy**; no late submission will be accepted. All written submissions must be in **12 font size Times New Roman, paginated, printed, and stapled/clipped**, with clear section headings if relevant.
- Announcements will be made both in class and via e-mail by sending e-mails at students' TTU e-mail account. Therefore students must **check TTU e-mails on a regular basis**, preferably at least once a day.
- Students are encouraged to set up **appointments with the instructor** to discuss issues related to the course. Constructive feedback about the course is encouraged at any time.

B. More specific policies on course requirements (see also *Course Schedule* below)

Attendance:

- Students are expected to be present in **every class**. In the event of missing the class, students must inform the instructor as soon as possible and justify their absences with proper documentation (e.g., doctor's notes) if possible at all. Failure to do so will have serious consequences: each unjustified absence will count as **-1 point** off of the entire grade. And students with **more than 4 absences** without justification will receive **an automatic F** for the course.
- Students must be punctual to respect other students' time, let alone their own. Being late for class more than twice without justification will lead to **lowering the course grade by one level**: e.g., an A becomes a B.

Participation:

- Being a graduate student, you are expected to come to each and every class **prepared and actively participate** in class discussion. This means that you will come to the class, having **completed reading assignments** in advance, preferably with some specific questions on them.
- In addition, on a day when a homework is due, you should be ready to **share** your own answers with the rest of the class and how you have arrived at the answers.

Homeworks:

- Homework assignments are meant to help develop **analytical reasoning** and **critical thinking skills** that you will need to become a successful linguist/scholar. Therefore, in your homework answers, you should strive to articulate your thoughts in a maximally **clear** and **logical** manner.
- The length of the homework may vary depending on the content and the nature of the problem. But it will be desirable if your answer contains a **brief but clear introduction and conclusion** wherever appropriate and is backed up by concrete **linguistic data** and **lucid reasoning**.

Language journal:

- **Immediately after Spring Break**, you will submit a **nine to ten-paged, double-spaced** language journal. In addition, you will be making a **brief in-class presentation** on the findings

reported in your journal. You must choose the language by **early February** and have it approved by me in writing (by sending me an e-mail).

- More instruction will be given later. But essentially, your journal should offer an **informative description** of the **morpho-syntactic and semantic properties** of the noun modifiers of a language that is relatively unfamiliar to you or relatively understudied, on the basis of your daily application of and practice with what you are learning in class and from the reading assignments.

Proposal on the final term-paper:

- By **early April**, you should submit a **two-paged, double-spaced** written proposal which clearly outlines the topic of your final term-paper. Your proposal must contain (i) a **brief literature review** (half the page at least), (ii) the **specific research question** you are after, and (iii) the **list of references** you will be building on. (Additionally, if relevant, you need to state the research methodology with which to investigate your topic; e.g., whether you will be conducting interviews with native speakers of a language or conduct a corpus data analysis.)
- One of the references included in your proposal should serve as a **point of departure** in your research—that is, it should be what you will most prominently take issue with or directly respond to in your paper. You are strongly encouraged to talk to me before deciding on your topic (either in person or over e-mail).

Final term-paper:

- You will submit your final term-paper on the last day of classes. Your paper has to be **14-15 pages long, double-spaced, excluding references**. Ideally, it should be an original research paper but it may be a state-of-the-art paper on a topic related to the course. If you opt to write a state-of-the-art paper, then you must make sure to provide a **highly informative, up-to-date summary** of and constructive criticism of the existing work on the topic. In addition, your paper must contain some **original contributions of your own** even if you may not be able to offer original solutions to the linguistic problem(s) at hand.
- **Evaluation criteria** for your paper will be: (i) organization and style and clarity of exposition (20%); (ii) thoroughness and accuracy of the literature review (40%); and (iii) originality of research (25%), and (iv) strength of argumentation (15%).

Presentation on the final term-paper:

- At the end of semester, you will make an in-class oral presentation on your term-papers. This presentation has to be done **professionally**, accompanied by a **hard copy handout**. You may choose to use powerpoint slides in addition but they won't be absolutely necessary. All presentations must occur on the **day they are scheduled**; failure to do so will **lower your grade by one level** (e.g., an A becomes a B).
- **Evaluation criteria** for your presentation will be: (i) structure/organization (30%); (ii) content (40%); and (iii) effectiveness of delivery (e.g., clarity, ability to maintain the audience's interests, professional demeanor) (30%).

C. Civility in the Classroom

- Students are expected to help maintain a classroom environment that is **conducive to learning**. Appropriate student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the telephone) creates a better environment for both teaching and learning.

- Students are **not** allowed to chat with someone in class creating disruption, text-message, talk on the phone, nor respond rudely to someone's remarks including the instructor. Such inappropriate behavior will minimally result in a **request to leave class** and maximally lowering the course grade by **more than one level**.
- Students are encouraged to participate actively in class but no one should dominate the entire class discussion. Such behavior will be considered **inappropriate** and hence will be subject to the same set of rules applied to inappropriate behavior outlined above.

D. Academic Integrity

- This course follows the University's statement on academic integrity, namely, "It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity" (*Bulletin of Texas Tech*, p. 82).
- It also abides by the Code of Student Conduct as laid out in the Student Affairs Handbook (<http://www.studentaffairs.ttu.edu/campuslife/handbook.pdf>). Failure to uphold such guidelines may result in one or more of the following penalties, depending on the instructor's assessment of the seriousness of the violation: e.g., failing grade on an assignment or for the entire course, reporting to the Dean of Students, referral for disciplinary action to the Student Mediation Center or other relevant disciplinary action.
- This class has no tolerance for cheating or plagiarism: cheating or plagiarism will result in an **automatic F regardless of the reason**.
 - ❖ What counts as **cheating**:
 - dishonesty on examinations, quizzes, and written assignments,
 - illegal possession of examinations,
 - use of unauthorized notes during an examination or quiz,
 - obtaining information during an examination from the examination paper or otherwise from another student,
 - help others to cheat,
 - alteration of grade records,
 - illegal entry to or unauthorized presence in an office.
 - ❖ What counts as **plagiarism**:
 - Plagiarism means using other people's work as if it were his or her own without proper acknowledgments.
 - Therefore, any student will be guilty of plagiarism if he or she fails to give credit for quotations or use essentially identical expressions of material taken from other sources including books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and the writings of other people.

E. Students with Disabilities

- Any student with disabilities who needs special arrangements to minimize the effects of their disabilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. But students must present appropriate verification from TechAccess first.

III. Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

The following is a rough week-by-week plan for the course. We may very well end up **diverging from it** depending on the progress we make and the particular topics that people express further interest in, but

this will give us a starting point and guidance. Whenever changes are made, they will be announced immediately either in class or via e-mail. (Note that below, under “Reading”, ‘H&P’ and ‘C’ respectively refer to Huddleston and Pullum 2005 and Cinque 2010 found in the reading list above.)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Notes
1	1/19	Introduction & overview		
2	1/24 1/26	Nouns & noun phrase structure Basics about Adjectives (ADJs)	H&P Ch. 5 H&P Ch. 6	Homework (HW) 1 given out
3	1/31 2/02	Basics about ADJ meaning Cont'd	Bolinger 1967; Partee 1995	HW 2 given out
4	2/07 2/09	Basics about relative clauses (RCs) Cont'd	H&P Ch. 11	Language for Language Journal determined; HW 3 given out
5	2/14 2/16	Relative ordering among noun (N) modifiers	Sproat & Shih 1990; C Ch. 2	HW4 given out
6	2/21 2/23	N modification: Germanic vs. Romance	C Ch. 2	
7	2/28 3/01	Cinque's two-source ADJ theory	C Ch. 3 & 4	HW5 given out
8	3/06 3/08	Cinque's analysis of English and Italian facts	C Ch. 5 & 6	
9	3/13 3/15	Spring Break: No class Spring Break: No class		
10	3/20 3/22	Report on language journal findings Additional cross-linguistic facts	C Appendix	Language Journal due
11	3/27 3/29	Events and nominal modification	Larson 1998	
13	4/03 4/05	DP structure and ADJ positions	Svenonius 2008	
14	4/10 4/12	Restrictive RCs vs. restrictive ADJs	Isac 2003	Proposal due
15	4/17 4/19	Two types of non-restrictive RCs	Cinque 2008	
16	4/24 4/26	Appositive nominal modifiers vs. appositive/non-restrictive RCs	Wang et al. 2006	

17	5/01 5/03	Loose ends and bigger picture issues (& Student presentations) Student presentations		
18	5/08	Student presentations		Term-paper due