UNIVERSITATEA BABEŞ-BOLYAI
BABEŞ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM
BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÄT
BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA

Facultatea de Litere
Str. Horea nr. 31
400202, Cluj-Napoca
Tel: 0264 5322388
Fax: 0264 432303

COURSE SYLLABUS

1. Information about the study program

1.1 University	Babeș-Bolyai University
1.2 Faculty	The Faculty of Letters
1.3 Department	English language and literature
1.4 Field of study	Language and literature
1.5 Study cycle (BA/MA)	Master
1.6 Study program/Qualification	Current Trends in Linguistics (DAL)

2. Information about the subject

2.1 Course title/Code	**LME1243 Theoretical models in minimalist syntax (taught in English)**							
2.2 Course tutor	Adriana Todea, PhD lecturer							
2.3 Seminar tutor	Adriana Todea, PhD lecturer							
2.4 Year of study	2	2.5 Semester	2	2.6 Type of assessment	E	2.7 Course status	Contents	DA
							Mandatory	DO

3. Total estimated time (teaching hours per semester)

3.1 Number of hours per week	4	of which: 3.2 course	1	3.3 seminar/laboratory	3
3.4 Total number of hours in the curriculum	48	of which: 3.5 course	12	3.6 seminar/laboratory	36

Time distribution	Hours
Study based on textbook/course manual/recommended reading/personal notes	65
Additional research in the library, by accessing scientific databases, or during field work	33
Preparation for seminars/laboratory classes, essays, portfolios and reports	40
Tutoring	2
Assessment (examinations)	2
Other activities	10

3.7 Total hours for individual study	152	
3.8 Total hours per semester	200	
3.9 Number of credits	8	

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

4.1 Curriculum	
4.2 Skills	A CEFR B2 level of language proficiency in English necessary to enable a comprehensive access to course content bibliography.

5. Conditions (if necessary)

5.1. For delivering lectures	• Classroom with media equipment
5.2. For teaching seminars/laboratory	• Classroom with media equipment

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classes	

6. Acquired specific competences

Professional competences	C1 Appropriate use of fundamental concepts in the study of general linguistics, theory of literature and comparative literature. C2 Efficient written and oral communication in English. C2.2 Appropriate and ethical use of scholarly literature; C3 Description of the grammatical structure of the English language and its use in text production and verbal interaction; C3.2 Explanation of syntactical, semantic and pragmatic classifications of linguistic data, analysis of spoken and written discourse in the English language by using conceptual frameworks of theoretical linguistics; Linguistic analysis using specialized concepts and terminology; Explanation and interpretation of syntax in natural languages; C5 Description of the phonetic, lexical, syntactic and semantic system of the English language and its use for the text production and translation, and verbal interaction
Transversal competences	CT1 Using the instruments of linguistics and literary studies in accordance to professional ethics. CT2 Teamwork; interpersonal communication, taking on specific roles.

7. Course objectives (derived from the specific competences acquired)

7.1 General objective of course	• This course is for students who already have a background in linguistics and syntax and are familiar with the earlier *Government and Binding* (GB) version of Generative Grammar. It presents the *Minimalist Program* as a working research project whose technical proposals show how minimalism has replaced and rethought GB's theoretical model without changing the fundamental assumptions of Generativism, whose theoretical approach has gained in the process a larger scope. The course offers an enriched general view of the Language Faculty by adding an evolutionary background to its already fertile research grounds in Language Acquisition. The goal of this course is to equip students with enough minimalist working knowledge to enable them to pursue minimalist research on their own.
7.2 Specific objectives	• Present and discuss evidence that support the innateness hypothesis; • Explain the architecture of syntactic phrases; • Explain concepts such as *language faculty* and *Universal Grammar (UG)*; • Have an up-to-date understanding of English syntax; • Acquire a universal perspective on language acquisition and production; • Acquire skills and knowledge that enable the student to use a generativist theoretical model for syntactic analysis: generate linguistic binary trees, distinguish between uninterpretable and interpretable features, identify traces of Movement operations, acquire modern perspectives on the nature of verb and noun phrases.

8. Contents

8.1 Lectures	Teaching methods	Remarks
1. Language and the brain	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing.	
2. Language as an instinct	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing.	

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3 Darwin's Problem.UG minimalism and the problem of language evolution: gradual vs. saltational evolution.	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing.	
4. Nativism and Child Language Acquisition. Plato's problem	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing.	
5. Properties of phrase structure: endocentricity, binary branching, single motherhood, order of merger, theta-marking, feature-checking. Syntactic operations: merger and adjunction	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
6. Syntactic Types: unaccusativity, unergativity, transitivity, ditransitivity	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
7. VP-shells, syntactic types and passive voice	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
8. Basic operations: Merge & Copy vs. Move. Movement economy guidelines and constraints: Last Resort, Greed, Enlightened Self-Interest	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
9. Control structures I. Reducing empty categories: PROs, pros, and DP-traces.	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees.	
12. Reducing the levels of syntactic representation. Overt and Covert movement. Computing features instead of lexicon: Move F!	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
11. Left periphery. The complementizer phrase: subclauses and interrogatives	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplification, problematizing. Animated generation of binary trees	
12. The Agree-based model	PowerPoint supported lecture: exemplifaction, problematizing.	

Bibliography

- Guasti, Maria Teresa (2002) *Language Acquisition. The Growth of Grammar*, MIT press, Cambridge, Mass
- Hauser, M., N. Chomsky, and W. T. Fitch (2002) "The Language Faculty: What is it, who has it, and how did it evolve?" in *Science, 298*, 1569-1579
- Hornstein, Norbert, Jairo Nunes, and Kleanthes K. Grohmann (2006) *Understanding Minimalism*, Cambridge University Press
- Hornstein, Norbert (2008) *A Theory of Syntax. Minimal Operations and Universal Grammar*, Cambridge University Press
- Radford, Andrew (2004) *Minimalist Syntax. Exploring the structure of English*, Cambridge University Press

8.2 Seminars	Teaching methods	Remarks
1. Language and the brain	Readings due,; problem-solving task, group work, debate	
2. Language as an instinct	Readings due,; problem-solving task, group work, debate	

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3 Darwin's Problem.UG minimalism and the problem of language evolution: gradual vs. saltational evolution.	Readings due,; problem-solving task, group work, debate	
4. Nativism and Child Language Acquisition. Plato's problem	Readings due,; problem-solving task, group work, debate	
5. Properties of phrase structure: endocentricity, binary branching, single motherhood, order of merger, theta-marking, feature-checking. Syntactic operations: merger and adjunction	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
6. Syntactic Types: unaccusativity, unergativity, transitivity, ditransitivity	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
7. VP-shells, syntactic types and passive voice	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
8. Basic operations: Merge & Copy vs. Move. Movement economy guidelines and constraints: Last Resort, Greed, Enlightened Self-Interest	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
9. Control structures I. Reducing empty categories: PROs, pros, and DP-traces.	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
12. Reducing the levels of syntactic representation. Overt and Covert movement. Computing features instead of lexicon: Move F!	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
11. Left periphery. The complementizer phrase: subclauses and interrogatives	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	
12. The Agree-based model	Practical aplication of theoretical knowledge: exemplification, exercises, pair/ group/ individual work.	

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- Hornstein, Norbert (2008) *A Theory of Syntax. Minimal Operations and Universal Grammar*, Cambridge University Press
- Radford, Andrew (2004) *Minimalist Syntax. Exploring the structure of English*, Cambridge University Press

9. Validating course contents based on the expectations of epistemic communities, professional associations and of potential employers related to the field of study.

- The topics discussed are based on the international bibliography in this field;
- The instructor has publications and PhD in the fields of Generative Grammar;
- Part of the aspects discussed in the course and the seminar have been presented at international or national conferences.

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10. Assessment (examination)

Type of activity	10.1 Assessment criteria	10.2 Assessment methods	10.3 Weight in the final grade
10.4 Lecture	• Written exam with two theoretical subjects	Written exam	50%
10.5 Seminar	• Written exam: 2 practical subjects requiring the application of theoretical knowledge in the analysis of linguistic data:	Written examination	50%
10.6 Basic performance standard			
Organizational details, exceptional situation management: •			

Date 10.04.2022	Course tutor's signature	Seminar tutor's signature
Date of department endorsement 14.04.2022	Head of department's signature	
Date of Dean's endorsement	Signature of the vice-Dean in charge	Faculty stamp