University of Arizona
Spring 2016 Biolinguistics
An introduction to Noam Chomsky's science of language
LING/PSYCH/PHIL 449A/549A

COURSE SY LLABUS 1

UPDATED

Course Details:
Time: Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. -- 5:50 p.m.
Semester Dates: Spring 2016: January 14th -- April 28th
Location: KOFFL Room 216
Credit: 3 units
Prerequisites: Some background in one of the following: Linguistics, Philosophy of Language, Psychology of Language, Cognitive Neuroscience.

Instructors:
Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini
Professor of Cognitive Science
Email: massimo@email.arizona.edu
Phone: (520) 626-6913
Office: Communication 305
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. -- 12:00 p.m. (and by appointment)

Simin Karimi
Professor and Head, Department of Linguistics
Email: Karimi@email.arizona.edu
Phone: (520) 955-2593
Office: Communication 106
Office Hours: By appointment

Thomas G. Bever
Regents Professor, Department of Linguistics
Email: tgb@email.arizona.edu
Phone: (520) 626-6366
Office: Communication 340A
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview:
This course is subdivided into three parts. Part 1 (January-February) will offer a general introduction to the major concepts, methods and theories of Chomsky’s approach to language, in their historical development, situated in the intellectual

1 This syllabus may be subject to change. Please read very regularly the possible updates on the syllabus posted and updated in the D2L page.
climate of the time. We will start with two recent general presentation of his theory of language, then we will run the clock backwards and present Chomsky's very influential critique of behaviorism (the dominant approach to language and cognition in the Forties and Fifties of the XX Century), then offer the essentials of how Chomsky’s new theory of language developed, from Transformational Grammar and its early impact on psycholinguistics, to the Standard Theory, to the Theory of Government and Binding to the Minimalist Program. Part 2 (March) will consist of three lectures by Noam Chomsky. The lectures will also be open to faculty and auditors. Each lecture will last approximately 90 minutes, after which faculty and auditors will be asked to leave the room and only registered students will stay, to ask questions and engage in a conversation with Chomsky. Part 3 (April) will offer a selection of a recent (January 2016) book by Noam Chomsky and Robert Berwick on language evolution and yet unpublished papers on the central notion of Parameters (destined to be published in a special issue of Linguistic Analysis edited by Simin Karimi and Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini). The central questions to be asked and (hopefully) answered are: Parameters, what are they? Where are they? A synthesis and a wrap-up will conclude this course.

Class participation
Registered students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and come prepared to discuss the assigned material in depth.

Assignments
This updated syllabus calls your attention to the fact that we have reorganized the requirements for ling. 449a/549a, Biolinguistics.

FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
There will be no midterm.
There will be no weekly reports/questions on each lecture.
There will be a final paper.

Instead of the midterm and weekly reports, there will be a required medium length discussion (about 2 pages) of each of 6 lecture modules, summarizing it and raising issues in relation to it.

This updated syllabus indicates how the course breaks down naturally into these modules of 3-4 weeks each (see the Course Contents below):

- History of modern theories of the sentence: in Linguistics and psychology.

- Further developments of generative theories: Aspects, Government and binding, Minimalism.

- Lectures by Chomsky, plus an enrolled students-only meeting with him.
- Language evolution (based on the new (2016) book by Chomsky and Berwick on evolution),

- On parameters (based on a special journal issue, in preparation)

FOR UNDERGRADUATES

There will be no weekly assignments. After each module there will be a timed multiple choice online test. And there will be a final exam which will involve multiple choice questions but may also include some short essay questions.

**Breakdown of grades (undergraduates)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and assignments</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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**Breakdown of grades (graduates)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and assignments</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>60%</td>
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Assignments have to be delivered in the d2L Dropbox before the specified deadline.

Dropboxes will be clearly labeled (Assignment 1, Graduate Students, Assignment 1, Undergraduate Students, and so on). Final papers will also have to be delivered onto well specified Dropboxes.

**Group Work and Academic Integrity**

The UA code of academic integrity can be found at: [http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity](http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity).

All assignments in this course are individual assignments, and each student must submit his or her own assignment. It is not acceptable to give your answers to other students, nor to ask other students to show you their answers. Evidence of answer-sharing will be pursued just as other forms of academic integrity violation.

However, students are encouraged to work together to help each other understand and successfully complete homework assignments (but not D2L quizzes), so long as each student completes his or her own assignment in his or her own words, and submits it separately from all other students. Students who work together, or assist each other, must acknowledge each other in their assignment submission (e.g. “Thanks to Jane Doe and John Smith for their assistance with this work”). Failure to acknowledge such collaboration is a form of plagiarism and will be subject to the university’s academic integrity code.

Any student who submits assignments containing unattributed quotations or paraphrases from another source will receive a failing grade in the course, and will be asked to meet with one of the instructors for a faculty-student interview as a part of the academic integrity procedures described in the Code.
Penalties for violations of the code of academic integrity will be:

- A grade of “E” for the course, if the violation occurs with no extenuating circumstances, or
- A score of zero on the offending assignment, if there are mitigating circumstances that warrant leniency, or
- A grade of “E” for the course AND a notation on your permanent record if we find that the violation is egregious or you have a previous record of violation of the code, or
- Expulsion from the university if you have several previous violations of the code.

All substantiated violations of the Code will be reported to the Dean of the students’ college(s), and/or to the Dean of Students Office, according to university policy.

**If, after reading the UA code of academic integrity, you still have questions** about what constitutes a violation of any part of the code (including plagiarism, answer-sharing, etc.), please don’t hesitate to contact one of the instructors.

**Code of Conduct and Other UA Policies**

We will also actively enforce the UA Student Code of Conduct and all other applicable UA policies and codes, found at:

http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes/studentcodeofconduct

http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with one of the instructors to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, you must register with Disability Resources (621-3268; drc.arizona.edu) and notify the instructors of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

**Technical Issues**

You will need regular access to the internet to access course reading materials, homeworks, D2L quizzes and exams. If you have problems, the 24/7 IT center may be able to help: http://the247.arizona.edu/. We will not be able to help you with personal technology problems, although don’t hesitate to let us know if you think there’s a technical problem with materials that we’ve posted!!

System slow-downs, network interruptions and the like are inevitable. Therefore, you **must** take this into account and make reasonable efforts to give yourself a back-up plan in case these problems arise. If you run into difficulty due to technical problems beyond your control, you **must**:

- Notify one of the instructors immediately of the timing and nature of the problem, AND
- Submit a problem report to the D2L team: http://fp.arizona.edu/d2l/problem_report_student.htm (without a problem report, you will be unable to receive accommodations), THEN
• Complete the work as promptly as possible given the circumstances.

Classroom Behavior
• You are expected to be on time for class and to stay for the whole class. If you know you will be late, or if you must leave early, please notify the instructor prior to the beginning of class, and enter and leave the classroom as unobtrusively as possible.
• Do not start packing up your things prior to the end of class. It is very distracting for everyone – especially the instructor! – to hear papers being shuffled, backpacks being unzipped, etc. while trying to finish up a class. We will make every effort to end the class on time; if we inadvertently go over the time, please respectfully let us know.
• You are expected to be respectful at all times during class. Students who are being disrespectful or disruptive may be asked to leave the class.
• Cell phones, Laptops, iPads and similar devices must be turned off during class.
• If you are doing outside work, listening to music, texting, reading the newspaper, sleeping, chatting with your neighbor, etc. during class, you may be asked to leave the classroom and/or may lose the opportunity for any activity points that day.
• If you have questions or concerns about what is appropriate classroom behavior, please talk to the instructors.
Course contents

The full citations of the papers and chapters indicated here under “Readings” are to be found below this table. They will be available in the D2L website, chronologically organized.

The names of the instructors are here abbreviated as (MPP) Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, (SK) Simin Karimi, (TGB) Thomas G. Bever.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>General introduction MPP, SK, TGB</td>
<td>(Chomsky 2013; McGilvray 2005; Smith 2005; Chomsky, Berwick et al 2015)</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Critique of Behaviorism TGB</td>
<td>(Chomsky 1996/1959)</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Transformational Grammar and Psychological reality TGB</td>
<td>Excerpts from (Chomsky 1957/2002) Excerpts from (Levelt 2014)</td>
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<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Generative Grammar, the linguistic wars and early psycholinguistics TGB</td>
<td>(Katz and Bever 1976) One chapter from (Townsend and Bever 2001)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>END OF MODULE 1. ASSIGNMENT 1 BECOMES ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>Deadline for Assignment 1: Wed. Feb, 10 10pm</td>
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<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>The theory of government and binding SK</td>
<td>(Lasnik 2002; Chomsky 1972, 1993)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>END OF MODULE 2. ASSIGNMENT 2 BECOMES ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>Deadline for Assignment 2: Wed March 2, 10pm</td>
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<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>A recorded recent lecture by Chomsky “After 60+ Years of Generative Grammar: A Personal Presspective”</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Theta Theory, Argument Structure and Distributed Morphology guest speaker Prof. Heidi Harley</td>
<td>(Hale &amp; Keyser 1993; Halle and Marantz 1993; Marantz 1997; Harley and MPP 2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>END OF MODULE 3. ASSIGNMENT 3 BECOMES ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>Deadline for Assignment 3: Wed. March 23 10pm</td>
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<td>Mar 14 to 20</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>1st lecture by Noam Chomsky: Minimal Computation, learnability, evolvability, and the architecture of language (Part 1)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>2nd lecture by Noam Chomsky: Minimal Computation, learnability, evolvability, and the architecture of language (Part 1)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Reference</td>
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<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>End of Module 4. Assignment 4 becomes accessible</td>
<td>Deadline for Assignment 4: Wed Apr 6 10 pm (Berwick &amp; Chomsky 2016. Chapters 1 and 2)</td>
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<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Language evolution (Part 2) MPP</td>
<td>(Berwick &amp; Chomsky 2016. Chapters 3 and 4)</td>
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<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>On parameters (1) SK and MPP</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>LAST LECTURE On parameters (2) and wrap-up SK, TGB and MPP</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>11:55 PM Ultimate deadline</td>
<td>To deliver final paper or final exam</td>
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**Readings (in chronological order)**


Excerpts from Townsend, D. J., & Bever, T. G. (2001). *Sentence Comprehension: The...*
Chomsky, N. (1985). “The nature of linguistic theory” from The Logical Structure of
Linguistic Theory. Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press.
Theory of Syntax” and Part 1 “Methodological Preliminaries”. The MIT Press
Semantics in Generative Grammar (pp. 11-61). The Hague: Mouton.
Chomsky, N. (1993, 7th edition)). Lectures on Government and Binding (The Pisa
Lectures on Classic Transformational Theory: Current Issues in Linguistics, No. 33.
Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
Hale, K., & Keyser, S. J. (1993). On argument structure and the lexical representation of
semantic relations. In S. J. Keyser & K. Hale (Eds.), The View from Building 20.
Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
Marantz, A. (1997). No Escape From Syntax: Don’t Try Morphological Analysis in the
Williams (Eds.), Proceedings of the 21st Annual Penn Linguistics Colloquium (pp.
Linguistics 4.2.
K. Hale & S. J. Keyser (Eds.), The View from Building 20 (pp. 111-176). Cambridge,
MA: The MIT Press.
Harley, H and M. Piattelli-Palmarini (2004) Handout on Marantz and on Hale and
Keyser
6(10), 432-437.
MIT Press. Chapter 3 “A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory”
Hamann & S. Matteini (Eds.), Structures, Strategies and Beyond. Studies in Honour
of Adriana Belletti. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
Rizzi, L (20015) Labeling, maximality and the head–phrase distinction. The Linguistic
Review (in press)
PRESS