

# SPRÅK8875: Phrase Structure and Functional Categories

– PhD course in Syntax

PhD course, NTNU - Trondheim, 29.09 - 1.10, 2015

**Course instructor:** Professor David Adger, Queen Mary University of London

**Organizers:** [Terje Lohndal](#) (NTNU) and [Peter Svenonius](#) (UiT)

Please register by August 20 by sending an email to [Terje Lohndal](#).

As usual, travel (flight and hotel) for members of partner institutions will be reimbursed if an application is submitted via the LingPhil website.

**Area:** Syntax

There will be four lectures on phrase structure and functional categories. The lectures will offer a historical perspective leading up to the different systems that mainstream generative grammar employs today (including a brief comparison with categorial grammar). This will provide some historical perspective to the advanced students while taking the less advanced students to where we are now. Further details and sample readings are provided in the attached course description.

In addition, there will be a round-table on the second afternoon featuring Adger, Lohndal and Svenonius. All students are required to attend and they are required to ask at least one question in order to pass the course. The goal of the roundtable discussion is to link the discussion in the lectures to broader issues in linguistic theory, in a way that students can have input on.

**Course credits:** 5 ECTS

**Requirements:** Read all the assigned literature, Attend the lectures, Ask at least one question at the roundtable discussion

Students who want 10 ECTS points will have to write a 10 page essay in addition.

# Phrase Structure and Functional Categories

David Adger

Trondheim  
March 2015

1. Class 1: This will focus on the function of phrase structure in connecting form and meaning vs. as a model of distribution. It will cover early models of phrase structure (especially PS-rules) and consider whether we need phrase structure (incorporating alternative perspectives such as categorial approaches and dependency approaches).
2. Class 2: This will focus on dependencies in phrase structure. What core empirical data are there that require us to go beyond monostratal phrase structure models (if any)? We will compare different approaches to capturing these dependencies and focus on the impact of structure preservation and how that affects the kinds of architecture we want to adopt for linguistic theory. We'll finish with the minimalist approach, where structure and dependency are folded into a single operation, and look at the consequences of that model.
3. Class 3: With this model in place, we then consider the questions of endocentricity (X-bar theory) and projection/labelling (whether all structures are endocentric). The question of labelling leads to the core issue of the distinction between lexical vs functional elements and how these behave in projection and selection. We will cover the core motivations for extended projections and compare these with other models of functional structure especially the more recent idea that roots start extended projections so that all labels are really functional labels.
4. Class 4: With a general model of rooted extended projections in place, we then explore the relationship between extended projections and morphologization (pronunciation), specifically how the structures of such a model might be spelled out, comparing different models of lexical spell out, extended projection spell out and tree spell out. Adopting a model of spell out as extended projection based, we then look at the notion of lexical items as stored syntactic structures, which leads to the idea that syntax is acquired through a kind of construction grammar in reverse. Time permitting we'll consider how this may connect to questions of frequency and usage patterns.

## References

Adger, David. 2013a. *A Syntax of Substance*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Adger, David. 2013b. Variability and grammatical architecture. In Carme Picallo, ed., *Linguistic Variation in a Minimalist Framework*, OUP, lingBuzz/001176.
- Alexiadou, Artemis and Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 1998. Parametrizing Agr: word order, V-movement and EPP-checking. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 16:491–539.
- Baker, Mark. 2002. Phrase structure as a representation of “primitive” grammatical relations. In William D. Davies and Stanley Dubinsky, eds., *Objects and Other Subjects*, 21–52, Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Brody, Michael. 1998. Projection and phrase structure. *Linguistic Inquiry* 29:367–398.
- Chametsky, Robert. 2000. *Phrase Structure: From GB to Minimalism*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1995. Bare phrase structure. In Gert Webelhuth, ed., *Government and Binding theory and the Minimalist Program*, 383–439, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.
- Frank, Robert. 2002. *Phrase structure composition and syntactic dependencies*. MIT Press.
- Fukui, Naoki and Takano, Yuji. 1998. Symmetry in syntax: Merge and demerge. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 7:27–86.
- Grimshaw, Jane. 1991. Extended projections, ms, Brandeis University.
- Jacobson, Pauline. 1987. Phrase structure, grammatical relations, and discontinuous constituents. In Geoffrey Huck and Almerindo E. Ojeda, eds., *Syntax and Semantics 20: Discontinuous Constituency*, 27–69, Academic Press, Inc.
- Moro, Andrea. 1997. Dynamic antisymmetry: Movement as a symmetry-breaking phenomenon. *Studia Linguistica* 51:50–76.
- Nash, Léa and Rouvert, Alain. 1997. Proxy categories in phrase-structure theory. In Kiyomi Kusumoto, ed., *Proceedings of North East Linguistic Society*, 287–304, McGill University: Graduate Linguistic Student Association.

# Phrase Structure and Functional Categories

*Norwegian Graduate Researcher School in Linguistics and Philology (LingPhil)*

NTNU Trondheim

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## **Tuesday September 29**

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:15-15:00 Adger – Lecture 1

## **Wednesday September 30**

10:15-12:00 Adger – Lecture 2

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:15-15:00 Adger – Lecture 3

16:16-18:00 Round-table (Adger, Lohndal, Svenonius)

19:00- Course dinner

## **Thursday October 1**

10:15-12:00 Adger – Lecture 4

12:00-13:00 Lunch

# Phrase Structure and Functional Categories

## Reading

David Adger

Trondheim  
September 2015

Focus on the readings with \*s next to them first.

1. Class 1: Historical questions about the ways that basic syntactic concepts were understood, and theoretical issues that arose from early systems  
Reading: Carnie (2010), chapters 2-6, revision only if needed (90pp); \*Chametsky (2000), Chapters 1 and 2 (36pp); Lyons (1968), chapter 6 (50pp)
2. Class 2: Solving the theoretical problems for connecting structure and dependency: Remarks, GB and Minimalism. Cycles and Interfaces. new problems!  
Reading: \*Chomsky (1970), as much as you can manage! (70pp); I'm not setting anything else for this class, as this is difficult enough.
3. Class 3: Single cycle structure building, options for Merge and interactions with the interfaces  
Reading: Rizzi (2013) (15pp); \*Gallego (2010) Chapter 1 (50pp);
4. Class 4: Extended projections, options for labelling, direct spell-out, the aSoS system, variability  
Reading: \*Adger (2013) (Chapters 1-2) If this is too difficult, there's a 20 pp precis on lingbuzz at <http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/001740>; Adger (2014); \*Grimshaw (1990) (63pp)

## References

- Adger, David. 2013. *A Syntax of Substance*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Adger, David. 2014. Variability and grammatical architecture. In Carme Picallo, ed., *Linguistic Variation in the Minimalist Framework*, 179–196, OUP.
- Carnie, Andrew. 2010. *Constituent Structure*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Chametsky, Robert. 2000. *Phrase Structure: From GB to Minimalism*. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing.

- Chomsky, Noam. 1970. Remarks on nominalization. In R. A. Jacobs and P. S. Rosenbaum, eds., *Readings in English Transformational Grammar*, 184–221, Waltham, MA: Ginn-Blaisdell.
- Gallego, Angel. 2010. *Phase theory*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Grimshaw, Jane. 1990. *Argument Structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Lyons, John. 1968. *Theoretical Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 2013. Introduction: Core computational principles in natural language syntax. *Lingua* 130:1 – 13.