

LAL 622 | Syntax and Semantics

Optional Course for the concentration track

Course Teachers: Dr. Hussein Zeraee

Credit Value: 3

Pre-requisites: Foundational concepts of general linguistics, their characteristics, and evolution.

Co-requisites: None

Course Duration: 14 weeks; Semester 2

Total Student Study Time: 126 hours, including 42 contact hours (lectures and seminars).



DOHA INSTITUTE
FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

كلية العلوم الاجتماعية والانسانية
School of Social Sciences and Humanities

AIMS

This course examines the foundational concepts and development of thinking on syntax and semantics, with a focus on the minimalist program. Students who successfully complete the course will:

- Understand research developments in language faculty: its content, components, and aims.
- Gain knowledge of syntax and semantics, and the ability to understand the nature of the relationship between them using the latest linguistic models.
- Ability to describe and explain the Arabic language using linguistic terminology and contemporary theoretical models
- Ability to compare classical Arabic with other natural languages through the application of the suppositions found in the minimalist program.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

In line with the program's efforts to produce graduates qualified to carry out world-class academic research in the fields of linguistics and lexicography using cross-disciplinary methods, this course will equip students with the scientific critical and analytical apparatus to contribute to the field. Throughout the course, students will gain advanced competence in linguistics research and learn to deal with the phonetic, morphological, syntactical, semantic, and pragmatic features of the language according to the latest linguistic frameworks and models. Further, students will be taught how to use this knowledge to solve current Arabic-language issues. These wide aims can be broken down as follows:

- Understanding the principles and essential components of the minimalist program as laid through Chomsky's works (1981, 1993, and others).
- Ability to apply knowledge of modern semantic theories, particularly Jackendoff's conceptual semantics (1987, 1993) and Ghalim's (1999 and 2007) to the features of Arabic.
- Understanding modern models of grammar and their application to natural languages.
- Using specific features of Arabic as understood by modern linguistic models to produce modern dictionaries: *The Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language* as an example.

1) Subject-specific skills:

- Understanding concepts of syntax and semantics, including the grammatical paradigm, grammatical parallel engineering, and imaginative semantics.
- Awareness that the order of components in Arabic differs to that in other languages (English for example) and is governed by specific restrictions and methods.

2) Core academic skills:

- Using concepts of syntax and semantics to analyze linguistic features in Arabic and English.
- Developing a command of the syntactic model and modern semantic theories.
- Using acquired knowledge to complete the master's thesis.

3) Personal and key skills:

- Be able to define concepts, compare phenomena, and deduce rules of syntax and semantics.
- Using results in syntax and semantics to construct an academic article on the minimalist program.
- Developing an independent academic research profile.

LEARNING/TEACHING METHODS

Teaching is delivered in three forms:

- 1) Lectures presenting the central questions and conclusions of approaches to syntax and semantics
- 2) Seminars based on the active participation of all students. These will present opportunities for additional analyses, treatments, and comparisons, as well as offering new material related to the issues raised in lectures
- 3) Student presentations of critical readings addressing the main linguistic theses on the relationship between syntax and semantics, looking at the issue from different theoretical perspectives.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Critical reading of works in linguistics (**Deadline for submission: Week 4**)
2. Study of a specific linguistic issue (**Deadline for submission: Week 6**)
3. Research paper, with topics to be assigned in week 1, 2, or 3.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment type	Length/Duration	Percentage of final mark	Submission deadline
Essay	1,000-1,200 words	20	Week 8
Research Paper	4,000-5,000 words	40	Week 12

Final exam	3 hours	40	Exam week
Total		100	

SYLLABUS PLAN

The minimalist program represents one of the latest linguistic paradigms advanced by Chomsky (1993), and is used to approach many linguistic features of natural languages. This paradigm has an excellent academic reputation within contemporary linguistics; it represents a universal grammar based on universal principles that are constant and independent of languages apart from a few features that distinguish one language family from another. It also allows for the two levels of representation demanded by conceptual need: phonetic form and logical form.

The minimalist program has been applied to Arabic by al-Fassi al-Fahri (1998 and 2010), who demonstrated that this theoretical framework—with its simple design and general principles—is able to analyze the various linguistic features of Arabic and other natural languages.

The class undertakes a syntactic-semantic study of Arabic according to the scheme of the lectures below:

Weekly schedule

Week	Topic
Week 1	Overview of the course syllabus and methodology
Week 2	Theoretical framework: the language faculty according to Chomsky (1993)
Week 3	Grammatical models prior to the minimalist program: the context of their emergence and development
Week 4	Developments in research on the syntactic and semantic levels of language: - Syntax and semantics or semantic syntax - Semantic representations or semantic representation - Level of logical form
Week 5	Issues in Arabic syntax: the structure of the Arabic sentence - Lexicographical and functional statements
Week 6	Derivation and feature checking in the minimalist program
Week 7	Applied models for comparing Arabic and English
Week 8	Semantics in modern linguistics: theories and foundations - Semantics in the model of the minimalist program
Week 9	Semantic generation: the lexicon—semantic fields
Week 10	Mechanisms for semantic generation among verbs and adjectives
Week 11	Conceptual semantics: Jackendoff (1985) and Ghalim (1987)
Week 12	Applied models for comparing Arabic and English
Week 13	Applied models in Arabic
Week 14	Course review

INDICATIVE READING LIST

1. Syntax

Arabic Sources

- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر: (١٩٩٠)، البناء الموازي: نظرية في بناء الكلمة وبناء الجملة، دار توبقال للنشر، الدار البيضاء.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر: (١٩٩٨)، المقارنة والتخطيط في البحث اللساني العربي، دار توبقال، الدار البيضاء.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر: (١٩٩٩)، عن التوارث في الحدود وبعض خصائص التسوير الكلي، ضمن وقائع المركبات الاسمية والحدية في اللسانيات المقارنة، منشورات معهد الدراسات والأبحاث للتعريب، الرباط.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر: (١٩٩٩)، المعجم العربي: نماذج تحليلية جديدة، دار توبقال للنشر، الدار البيضاء.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر: (٢٠٠٢)، المعجم العربي المولد: منشورات معهد الدراسات والأبحاث للتعريب بالرباط.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر، عبد الرزاق التورابي، محمد الرحالي ومحمد غاليم (١٩٩٩)، المركبات الاسمية والحدية في اللسانيات المقارنة، منشورات معهد الأبحاث والدراسات للتعريب، الرباط.
- الفاسي الفهري، عبد القادر (٢٠١٠): ذرات اللغة العربية وهندستها، دراسات استكشافية أدنوية، دار الكتاب الجديد المتحدة، لبنان.
- الرحالي محمد (٢٠٠٢): تركيب اللغة العربية، مقارنة جديدة، دار توبقال للنشر، الدار البيضاء.
- البوشيخي عز الدين (٢٠١٢) التواصل اللغوي: مقارنة لسانية وظيفية .
- الراضي محمد ونادية عمري (٢٠٠٢): الخصائص التركيبية للوحدات المعجمية – المعجم العربي المولد.
- العميري نادية (٢٠٠٨): تركيب الصفات في اللغة العربية، دراسة مقارنة جديدة.

Non-Arabic Sources

- Chomsky, N. *Syntactic Structures*, Mouton, The Hague, 1957
- Chomsky, N. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, MIT Press, 1965.
- Chomsky, N. *Lectures on Government and Binding*, Foris Publications, Dordrecht, 1981.
- Chomsky, N. *Knowledge of Language, its Nature, Origin and Use*, Praeger, New York, 1986.
- Chomsky, N. *Barriers*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1986.
- Chomsky, N. "A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory," *The View from Building 20* [Hale and Keyser eds], MIT Press, Cambridge, 1993.
- Chomsky, N and H. Lasnik. *The Theory of Principles and Parameters*, in Chomsky, 1995, pp13-127.
- Fassi Fehri, A. *Issues in the Structure of Arabic Clauses and Words*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1993.
- Makhoukh, A. "Agreement Phenomena in Standard Arabic, Doctoral dissertation," in Moulay Ismail.
- Radford, A. *Transformational Grammar*, Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Radford, A. *Syntactic theory and the structure of English: A Minimalist Approach*, 1997.

2. Semantics

Arabic sources

- غاليم محمد (١٩٨٧): التوليد الدلالي في البلاغة والمعجم، دار توبقال للنشر، الدار البيضاء.
- غاليم محمد (١٩٩٩): المعنى والتوافق: مبادئ لتأصيل البحث الدلالي العربي، سلسلة أبحاث وأطروحات، منشورات معهد الدراسات والأبحاث للتعريب، الرباط.
- غاليم محمد (١٩٩٩): بعض العلاقات الدلالية في البنيات الإضافية، ضمن الفاسي الفهري وآخرين، ص ١٥٩-١٦٠.
- غاليم محمد (٢٠٠٧): النظرية اللسانية والدلالة العربية المقارنة: مبادئ وتحليل جديدة، دار توبقال للنشر.
- مختار عمر احمد (١٩٩٨): علم الدلالة، عالم الكتب، القاهرة.
- محمد محمد يونس علي: المعنى وظلال المعنى: أنظمة الدلالة في العربية، القاهرة.
- فاخوري عادل (١٩٨٥): علم الدلالة عند العرب، دار الطليعة، بيروت.
- غاليم محمد (٢٠٠٢): الأبجدية الدلالية والتوليد، ضمن أبحاث المعجم العربي المولد، منشورات معهد الدراسات والأبحاث للتعريب، الرباط.
- البوشيخي عز الدين (١٩٩٨): قدرة المتكلم التواصلية وإشكال بناء الأنحاء، أطروحة دكتوراه، مكناس، كلية الآداب.
- البوشيخي عز الدين (٢٠٠٩): أعمال ندوة المنحى الوظيفي في اللسانيات العربية وأفاقه، منشورات جامعة مولاي إسماعيل، كلية الآداب، مكناس.
- البوشيخي عز الدين (٢٠١٢): التواصل اللغوي: مقارنة لسانية-مكتبة لبنان الناشر.
- المتوكل أحمد (١٩٩٨): الجملة المركبة في اللغة العربية، الرباط، منشورات عكاظ.
- المتوكل أحمد (١٩٩٦): قضايا اللغة العربية في اللسانيات الوظيفية، بنية المكونات أو التمثيل الصرفي-التركيب، الرباط، دار الأمان.
- المتوكل أحمد (٢٠١٠): الخطاب وخصائص اللغة العربية: دراسة في الوظيفة والبنية والنمط، منشورات الاختلاف، دار الأمان، الرباط.

Non-Arabic sources

- Jackendoff, R. *Semantic Interpretation in Generative Grammar*, Cambridge, Mass, 1972.
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- Jackendoff, R. *Semantic Structures*, MIT Press, 1990.
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