

Title: Theories of clause size and their implications

Subtitle: *Exfoliation and its implications for case, binding phenomena, tense interpretation and more*

Why do clauses come in different sizes and flavors: finite vs. non-finite, introduced by a complementizer vs. complementizerless, nominal vs non-nominal, etc.? The impetus for the class is a new proposal advanced and explored in Pesetsky (2019). This work posits that many of these distinctions are not the result of distinct morpho-lexical material chosen for clause building (the standard theory in almost all frameworks), but instead are the consequence of a derivational process of "Exfoliation" that strips away one or more outer layers of a clause as a precondition for extraction of its subject.

This proposal, though new in a modern syntactic context, is actually a revival of the oldest proposals in generative grammar. In a modern setting, however, has implications for many of the most central topics in the theory of syntax.

This class will familiarize students with several of these topics in a manner accessible to intermediate as well as advanced syntax students: the history of discussion as well as the ways in which the Exfoliation proposal suggests new possibilities and conclusions. These topics will include:

- (1) debates over nominal case (where it comes from and why it exists in the first place)
- (2) subject/non-subject extraction asymmetries (why they are ubiquitous but not uniform across languages)
- (3) special restrictions on nominative reflexives, the so-called Anaphor-Agreement effect (likewise ubiquitous, and likewise not uniform across languages)
- (4) correlations between finiteness and tense interpretation - how and why non-finite clauses receive interpretations distinct from finite counterparts (and how and why they vary among themselves)

(Topic 4 represents the instructor's first attempts to integrate the proposals and discoveries reported over the last decade of research by Wurmbrand.)

Readings

Because this is a short 8-day class, no reading will have the status of required reading. But it would be extremely useful to read as much of the first paper below as possible, and to at least have a look at the remaining readings before class. Readings will be posted on a class website whose URL will be announced no less than two weeks before the first class.

relevant throughout the class:

Pesetsky, David. 2019. *Exfoliation: Towards a Derivational Theory of Clause Size*.
<https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/004440>

topic 1

Pesetsky, David, and Esther Torrego. 2011. Case. In Cedric Boeckx (ed.), *Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 52-73.

Bobaljik, Jonathan and Susi Wurmbrand. 2009. Case in GB/Minimalism (with Susi Wurmbrand). In Andrej Malchukov and Andrew Spencer, eds. *Handbook of Case*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 44-58.

topic 2

Pesetsky, David. 2017. Complementizer-trace effects. In: Everaert, Martin & Henk Van Riemsdijk, eds. *Companion to Syntax*, 2nd edition.
[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118358733.wbsyncom1_08/full]

topic 3

Woolford, Ellen. 1999. More on the anaphor agreement effect. *Linguistic Inquiry* 30:257–287.
URL <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4179061>.
Sundaresan, Sandhya. 2016. Anaphora vs. agreement: introducing a new kind of Anaphor Agreement Effect. In *The impact of pronominal form on interpretation*, ed. Patrick Grosz and Pritty Patel-Grosz, 77–106. De Gruyter Mouton. URL <http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/002167>.

topic 4

Wurmbrand, Susi und Magdalena Lohninger. 2019. An implicational universal in complementation—Theoretical insights and empirical progress. Submitted to: Hartmann, Jutta M. and Angelika Wöllstein (eds), *Propositional Arguments in Cross-Linguistic Research: Theoretical and Empirical Issues*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
<https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/004550>

Wurmbrand, Susi. 2014. Tense and aspect in English infinitives. *Linguistic Inquiry* 45.3: 403-447.
doi: 10.1162/LING_a_00161

Wurmbrand, Susi. 2015. Restructuring cross-linguistically. In: *Proceedings of the North Eastern Linguistics Society Annual Meeting 45*, ed. by Thuy Bui and Deniz Özyıldız, 227-240. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, GLSA.

Assessment

Students should submit a short paper (3-5 pages) that offers between 1 and 3 questions or observations relevant to topics discussed in the class. Explain in each case why the question or observation is interesting, and explore possible answers or solutions. Longer papers are acceptable, but the questions should be contentful and specific, concerning actual empirical puzzles raised by the class.