Special course: *On the subject of the subject / Az alany tárgyáról*

instructor: Marcel den Dikken (DELG/ELTE & RIL/HAS)
course requirements: Students who wish to obtain credits for this course are required to write a conference abstract related to the material discussed in the course.

course description:
Subjects are difficult to define, and their syntactic behaviour is hard to account for in a principled way. The trouble with subjects in the standard theory is so pervasive that it calls for a close look.

In the first part of this special course, the central players in the syntax of the subject and its vagaries are presented, with special emphasis on the principles-and-parameters approach to syntactic theory (Chomsky 1981 *et seq.*), and with an eye towards bringing the two key principles (the EPP and the ECP) together in a unified analysis (Chomsky 2014).

In the second part of the course, a new outlook on an integrated account of the restrictions imposed on subject dependencies will be developed. The approach has two main ingredients, both simple and conceptually anchored: a licensing condition on specifiers (with two specific instantiations, one for A–specifiers and the other for traces in specifier positions), and a definition of the Agree relation that models it as a downward-looking relation in the general case but allows it to search upwards under well-defined circumstances.

The course will presuppose a general familiarity with the generative approach to sentence structure, but will not require specific knowledge of the problems that are associated with the subject and its syntactic behaviour.

Projected Schedule: this is going to be a 5-day intensive course
Special course: Nanosyntax: what is it? / Haladó bevezetés a Nanoszintaxisba

instructor: Pavel Caha (Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic)
contact hours: the course material corresponds to 2 hours per week
credits: BA/MA: 4 credits, PhD: 7 credits
course requirements: Students are expected to attend all classes. In addition, as a take-home exercise they should think about their native language and see if they can come up with an interesting case of a *A-B-A pattern (degree morphology, locatives/directionals, wh-morphology, ...), and how one could explain that pattern with the tools presented at the seminar.

Course description:
The course provides an introduction to a theory of the syntax-morphology interface called Nanosyntax. Two main features of the theory are: 1) a fine grained syntactic decomposition and 2) a post-syntactic spell-out procedure based on phrasal lexicalization. The course covers both the ‘ideology’ and ‘technology’: what are the new tools, how and when to use them, and why it is interesting to pursue this line of research.

Projected Schedule: this is going to be a 5-day intensive course

● Day 1: Phrasal spell-out introduced

Contents: How does phrasal spell-out work? What are its advantages?
Reading: STARKE 2009, 2011; CAHA 2009 CH.2, TARALDSEN 2009 (MCCAWLEY 1968)

● Day 2: *A-B-A

Contents: Syncretism as a new diagnostic in linguistics
READING: CAHA 2009 CH.1, PANTCHEVA 2010, TARALDSEN 2010 (BOBALJIK 2012 CH. 2, VANGSNES 2013)

● Day 3: Spell-out driven movement

Contents: Phrasal spell-out as a movement trigger

● Day 4: Diagnosing sub-morphemic structure: ellipsis, concord

Contents: Is there really syntactic structure inside morphemes? How can we tell?
READING: CAHA 2013 (CAHA 2013)

● Day 5: Beyond *A-B-A

Contents: Complex morphological systems
READING: CAHA AND PANTCHEVA 2012 (CAHA 2012)

References

All links go to open access sources; brackets indicate where these may slightly differ from the official version.


Taraldsen, Tarald. 2010. The nanosyntax of Nguni noun class prefixes and concords. Lingua 120 6: 1522 – 1548. (http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/000876 — published version differs substantially)