LINGUIST9714B/4248G/FRENCH9714B:
Argument realisation: causative alternation and related issues

Course hours: Friday, 10h30 to 13h30
Professor: Jacques Lamarche
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Office hours: To be determined by Doodle

Original course description and title: Causative Alternation in French and English
This course explores a specific case of argument alternation, the causative alternation, seen with the contrast between *the door opens* and *John opens the door*. In the causative alternation, the entity denoted by the NP in subject position of the intransitive use of the verb *open, the door*, appears in the object position of the transitive use of same verb; the NP in subject position then denotes an entity that is understood as being responsible for the coming about of the state of affairs described by the sentence. In the course, we'll try to establish under which circumstances this alternation is possible by comparing related classes of verbs of motions in English and French, which show different behaviors with respect to this alternation. This discussion will allow us to present different hypotheses proposed to account for this alternation, and to evaluate whether these hypotheses can provide an account for the difference discussed between English and French.

Revised course description
With the advent of generative grammar, a central issue regarding knowledge of language has been how to restrict the capacity of the grammatical system: if, as generative grammar assumes, knowledge of sentences is the product of a rule system, there must be some boundaries put on this system so that it does not lead to a proliferation of potentially ungrammatical outputs. In this course, we will try to understand this question by considering how researchers in lexical semantics have attempted to restrict the realisation of arguments in the sentence by appealing to the semantic of verbal predicates. In doing this, we will provide an overview of some of the central questions in syntactic theory, and provide a more focus discussion of the relation between syntax and lexical knowledge.

Objective of the course
At the end of the course, the students should be able to:
- Understand the broad issues raised by the interplay between syntax and lexical semantics
- Understand fundamental notions behind argument realisation in English and other languages
- Analyze basic argument patterns for verbs and classes of verbs
- Present data that shows patterns of argument realization
- Present and summarize analysis of patterns of argument realization
- Communicate through an abstract, a short paper or a presentation an analysis of patterns on argument realization.

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Grading is based on:
2 group presentations @ 15%   30%
2 group summaries @ 10%   20%
1 individual final paper for 50%
      A topic   5%
      An outline   10%
      Final paper   35%   50%
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Presentation in class: Each student will be doing two presentations (in a group of at least two) of about 30-40 minutes. The preparation of these presentations will be closely supervised by the professor; for the first presentation, he will be actively involved in assisting the students to establish the content and organisation of the presentations, providing specific guidelines and helping the students to construct the argumentation and how it relates to the fact presented. For the second presentation, the professor will be less involved in the preparation of the presentation, asking the students to replicate the process that was done with the professor in the first presentation.

After each presentation, the students will produce a 750-words abstract that summarizes the content of their presentation.

Requirements for the research paper: The goal is to identify an empirical or theoretical problem concerning argument realization. Format: 20-pages maximum, 12-point font, 1.5 line spacing, 1-inch margins.

Attendance: Attendance and active participation in all lectures is required.

Preliminary scheduling:

Date	What
1 January 6	Syllabus, presentation and getting to know each other
2 January 13	What is knowledge of language, what is syntax, and why study it? Reading to prepare: Fukui & Narita 2014 (first 10 pages are what is important).
3 January 20	Some big questions we will not be dealing with here, but you should be aware of. Reading to prepare: TBA
4 January 27	Argument structure part 1 Reading to prepare: Mateu 2014 or Ramchand 2013.
5 February 3	Argument structure part 2 Reading to prepare: Mateu, J. 2014 or Ramchand 2013.
6 February 10	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
7 February 17	Presentations from students

February 24	Reading week
8 March 3	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
9 March 10	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
10 March 17	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
11 March 24	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
12 March 31	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA
13 April 7	Presentations from students Reading to prepare: TBA

Readings (to be expanded during the course) (all these are available on-line through Western Libraries, and can be downloaded).

Fukui, N and H Narita. 2014. Merge, labeling and projection. In Carnie, A., Y. Sato and D. Siddiqi (eds). *The Routledge handbook of syntax*, pp. 3-23. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Mateu, J. 2014. Argument structure. In Carnie, A., Y. Sato and D. Siddiqi (eds). *The Routledge handbook of syntax*, pp. 24-41. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Ramchand, G. 2013. Argument structure and argument structure alternations. In den Dikken M. (ed.) *The Cambridge handbook of generative syntax*, pp. 265-321. Cambridge, England : Cambridge University Press, c2013.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth **less** than 10% must contact the instructor

and follow the course specific instructions provided on the course outline. Final examinations must be written at the scheduled time unless formal alternative arrangements for a Special Examination have been approved (by the instructor, the Department and the Home Faculty Dean's Office) based on valid documented grounds.

A downloadable Student Medical Certificate can be found here:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Support services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness website http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Statement on Plagiarism, Cheating and other Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence in the Academic Handbook available on the Academic Calendar website, here: http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg113.html

Policy on Attendance

"Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of
Registration." (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/examinations.html)

Important Academic Information for Students Taking Courses in the Department of French Studies

http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic_information/index.html