



SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS

Enrollment year	2009/2010
Academic year	2009/2010
Regulations	DM270
Academic discipline	L-LIN/02 (DIDACTICS OF MODERN LANGUAGES)
Department	DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES
Course	THEORETICAL AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS; LINGUISTICS AND MODERN LANGUAGES
Curriculum	PERCORSO COMUNE
Year of study	1°
Period	1st semester (01/10/2009 - 13/01/2010)
ECTS	6
Lesson hours	30 lesson hours
Language	Italian
Activity type	ORAL TEST
Teacher	JEZEK ELISABETTA (titolare) - 6 ECTS
Prerequisites	Familiarity with basic principles in syntax and semantics.
Learning outcomes	The aim of the course is to provide methods and formal tools to conduct semantic and syntactic analysis at the lexicon/syntax interface.
Course contents	<p>Verb Aspect and Event Structure</p> <p>In this course we examine how natural languages encode information about the type of event expressed by predicates. We analyze the main verb aspectual classes proposed in the literature, including semelfactives, degree achievements and incremental theme verbs. We discuss recent approaches that propose to integrate into the linguistic representation of events information about the changes that the participants go through during the execution sequences, using scalar structures.</p>

Lastly, we examine the role played by compositional variables (quantized objects, adverbials, etc.) in coercing the basic event type of a predicate in context.

The overall goal of the course is to offer the state of the art of research on this topic. The students will be asked to carry out a corpus-based analysis of event coercion phenomena.

Teaching methods

Lectures
Slides
Weekly readings
Presentations in class
Lab

Reccomended or required readings

Textbook:

Jezek E. *Lessico. Classi, strutture, combinazioni*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005 (chapters 2, 3 and 4).

Articles (for weekly readings; available at the library of the Linguistic Department; the one marked with *** are obligatory for the final assignment):

Beavers J. 2008. "Scalar complexity and the structure of events". In Dölling J., T. Heyde-Zybatow and M. Schäfer (eds) *Event structures in Linguistic Form and Interpretation*. Berlin – New York: Walter de Gruyter.

***Bertinetto P.M. 1991. "Il verbo" in L. Renzi & G.P. Salvi (a cura di) *Grande Grammatica Italiana di Consultazione*, Vol. II. Bologna: Il Mulino, in part. paragrafo 1.4 Azione Verbale, 26-41.

Bertinetto P.M. and M. Squartini 1995. "An attempt at defining the class of 'Gradual Completion Verbs'" in P.M. Bertinetto et al. (eds.) *Temporal reference, Aspect and Actionality*. Vol. I: *Semantic and Syntactic Perspectives*. Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier, 11-26.

Binnik R.I. 1991. *Time and the Verb. A Guide to Tense and Aspect*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, cap. 5 "Explanation in Aspectology", 170-214.

Bonomi A. & A. Zucchi 2001. *Tempo e Linguaggio*. Milano: Mondadori, cap. 2 "Le classi azionali", 133-203.

***Dowty D. 1979. *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar*. Dordrecht: Reidel, cap. 2.2 "The Aristotle-Ryle-Kenny-Vendler classification", 47-71.

Dowty D. 1991. "Thematic proto-roles and argument selection". *Language*, 67, 547-619.

Engelberg S. 1999. "Verb Meaning as Event Structure", available at www.ids-mannheim.de/lexik/texte/engelberg/lacus99.pdf.

Hay J., C. Kennedy and B. Levin. 1999. "Scalar Structure underlies Telicity in "Degree Achievements"". In The proceedings of SALT IX, Tanya Matthews and Devon Strolovitch (eds). Ithaca: CLC Publications, 127-144.

Moens M and M. Steedman 1988. "Temporal Ontology and Temporal Reference". Computational Linguistics, vol. 14, n. 2, 15-28.

Naumann, R. 2001. "Aspects of change: A dynamic event semantics". Journal of Semantics 18: 27-81.

***Pustejovsky J. 1991. "The Syntax of Event Structure". Cognition 41, 47-81.

Pustejovsky J. 2000. "Events and the semantics of opposition". In Events as Grammatical Objects, C. Tenny and J. Pustejovsky (eds), Stanford: CSLI Publications, 445-482.

***Rappaport Hovav M. and B. Levin. 1998. Building verb meanings. In The Projection of Arguments: Lexical and Compositional Factors, Miriam Butt and Wilhelm Geuder (eds). Stanford (CA): CSLI Publications, 97-134.

Rappaport Hovav, M. 2008. Lexicalized meaning and the internal temporal structure of events. In S. Rothstein (ed), Crosslinguistic and Theoretical Approaches to the Semantics of Aspect, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 13-42.

Rothstein S. 2004. Structuring Events: A study in the Semantics of Lexical Aspect. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, cap. 1 "Verb Classes and Aspectual Classification", 1-35.

Tenny C. 1989. "The Aspectual Interface Hypothesis". Lexicon Project Working Papers 31, Cambridge Mass., MIT, 1-18.

***Van Valin R. D. Jr. 2005. Exploring the Syntax-Semantics Interface. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, cap. Verb classes and Logical Structures, 31-50.

***Vendler, Z. 1967. "Verbs and Times". In Linguistics in philosophy, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 97-121.

Verkuyl, H. J. 1989. "Aspectual classes and aspectual composition". Linguistics and Philosophy 12, 39-94.

Smith, C. 1991. The Parameter of Aspect. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishing, ch. 2.3.4, "Semelfactives", pp. 55-58.

Assessment methods

Final oral exam covering material from the entire course.
Final assignment reporting the results of a corpus-based analysis of event coercion phenomena.

Further information

Sustainable development goals - Agenda 2030

[\\$lbl legenda sviluppo sostenibile](#)