

Title of Seminar: What Pronouns Reveal about Universal Grammar
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Minimalism forces a re-assessment of the conceptual status of various components of the grammar: this seminar explores the syntactic properties of pronominal forms in a minimalist perspective. For example, in a minimalist approach, binding-theoretic principles such as **Condition A** (which regulates the distribution of reflexives & reciprocals), **Condition B** (which regulates the distribution of ordinary pronouns), and **Condition C** (which regulates the distribution of R-expressions) can not exist as independent constraints. Rather, the domain conditions associated with pronominal forms—be they reflexives, reciprocals, or ordinary pronouns—arise via the interaction of the feature specification of the forms themselves in conjunction with the combinatoric operation Merge (and Move, which is a special instance of Merge). Likewise, the distinction between A-binding and A-bar binding cannot be a primitive of the grammar, but must reduce to properties of the chain-formation algorithm (i.e. Move).

In this context, the seminar explores topics related to the formal status of pronominalization, and reports on ongoing research by Dechaine & Wiltschko whose working hypothesis is that pronominal denotations are structurally determined. (This is an extension of Dechaine & Wiltschko 2002.)

No previous knowledge of the binding-theoretic literature is assumed; relevant background readings will be identified as the seminar progresses.

The seminar will take place over a period of 3 weeks (11-14, 18-20, 25-27 May), on Tuesday and Friday afternoons (14h00-17h00; 2.00-5.00pm) the first week, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons the following weeks.

Following is a preliminary schedule of topics to be covered (subject to change):

Tu 11 May: The minimalist legacy: syntax as an interface. Reinhart's insight: bound variable anaphora. Puzzles about pronouns. The D/Phi/N analysis

Fr 14 May: The D/Phi/N analysis applied to pronominals. Dissolving Condition B. Diagnosing the categorical status of pronouns and of pronominal agreement.

Tu 18 May: The D/Phi/N analysis applied to reflexives and reciprocals. Dissolving Condition A. Diagnosing the categorical status of reflexives and reciprocals.

Th 20 May: The D/Phi/N analysis applied to disjoint reference. Dissolving Conditions B and C. Diagnosing the categorical status of switch-reference, (anti)logophoricity, and obviation

Tu 25 May: The D/Phi/N analysis applied to indexicals. Dissolving Condition C. When

and why are 1st and 2nd person pronouns bound variables?

Th 27 May: The D/Phi/N analysis applied to resumptives. Dissolving A'-binding.
Diagnosing the categorical status of resumptives.