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James Huang BLCU, Summer 2010 Tentative Schedule # Date Topic (or speaker)　Discussion and homework　1 06-17 (Thu) Lec. 1: Preliminaries to the study of syntax　Diagnostics problem set　2 06-22 (Tue) Lec. 2: Phrase structure and movement parameters　Reading (Fukui, Progovac)　3 06-24 (Thu) Lec. 3: Phrase structure and argument structure　Reading (Larson, Harley, Rappaport-Havov, Huang)　4 06-29 (Tue) Discussion of homework problems　Conducted by TA　5 07-01 (Thu) Lecture by Prof. Mingle Gao　Reading of abstracts　6 07-06 (Tue) Discussion of readings (GLOW abstracts)　Presentation by students　7 07-08 (Thu) Lecture by Prof. Fuzhen Si　Reading of abstracts　8 07-13 (Tue) Discussion of readings (GLOW abstracts)　Presentation by students　9 07-15 (Thu) Lec. 4: Parametric variation: analytic-synthetic　Reading assignment　10 07-20 (Tue) Lecture by Prof. Masao Ochi　Reading assignment　11 07-22 (Thu) Lec. 5: Parametric change: analytic-synthetic　Reading assignment　12 07-27 (Tue) Lec. 6: Special topics (GLOW)　Reading assignment　13 07-29 (Thu) Lec. 7: Special topics (GLOW)　Reading assignment　14 08-03 (Tue) Discussion　Reading assignment　15 08-05 (Thu) Lec. 8: Reflections　Reading assignment　Lecture 1: Preliminaries to the theory of syntax Knowledge of language and Plato扭 problem Knowledge of language as an object of scientific inquiry Linguistic knowledge What it is, how it is acquired, how it is put to use Scientific inquiry　an ability or willingness to be puzzled by the simplest things Nature of linguistic knowledge Take two examples (from Larson 2010): a. Homer expected to surprise him. b. I wonder who Homer expected to surprise him. c. I wonder who Homer expected to surprise. Larson (2010, 17): The judgments we have about 愚urpriser and 愚urpriseee are intricate and subtle, but obvious to anyone who knows English. credited to Larry Horn: a. Who do you want to succeed? Who do you wanna succeed? The nature and origin of our linguistic knowledge: a. It is tacit: unconscious knowledge b. It is complex: subtle and intricate c. It is untutored: not taught d. It is gained in the face of very impoverished input. The last point is known as 挾anguage acquisition under a poverty of the stimulus Types of stimulus (i.e. evidence that triggers learning): a. direct positive b. direct negative c. indirect positive d. indirect negative This is also known as Plato扭 Problem (Chomsky 1986) [how can we know so much when there is no evidence for what we came to know] (as opposed to Orwell扭 Problem). Other relevant examples a. Subject-object asymmetries b. Complement adjunct asymmetries c. NP structure: a French English teacher, etc. The Biolinguistic View The biolinguistic view: UG Biological element = nature + nurture Genotype (nature) + nurture (phenotype Linguistic genotype + experience (linguistic phenotype Universal grammar (UG) (experience (particular grammar (GE LG, etc.) Language Acquisition Device (LAD) (Primary Linguistic Data (PLD) (Adult grammar (UG = part of what we know as children, prior to experience. Evidence for UG and the biolinguistic view: a. Effortless successful acquisition under poverty of stimulus b. Deep uniformity under superficial language diversity c. Uniform acquisition process by children with diverse backgrounds d. Uniform success in acquiring any language regardless of race and place of birth Language diversity: contribution of nurture (experience, the primary linguistic input). How? The Principles and Parameters model a. UG = principles + parameters b. Experience (PLD) = triggers c. Task of language acquisition: fix parameters on the basis of PLD An analogy: sunshine, irrigation, fertilizers [nitrogen, potash, phosphate], etc. The biological view of grammar acquisition: The 惨rowth of grammar , rather than learning of grammar. 挹is UG has grown up into English Grammar!　The process of growth: from initial state (UG) (state 1, state 2, (steady state (adult grammar) The process is one of abduction reasoning. (Charles Peirce). 捲bduction guesses toward best or most-simplifying explanations in order that deduction can explicate them into implied consequences that induction can evaluate in tests.　(Wiki) The phenomenon of growing under a poverty of stimulus is typical of anything biological. The term 挹overty of the stimulus　simply happened to be used in linguistics. [Chomsky 2009 remark] On the powers of Nature The enabling and the constraining powers of nature The enabling and the constraining powers of UG The task of linguistic theory The task of the natural biologist: to discover the genomic structure of X The task of the linguistic biologist: to hack into the human brain for the human UG, and explain PGs. How does a hacker work? (abductively, too) Recap: The biological view of language acquisition: 挹iolinguistics biological element = nature + nurture genotype (experience (phenotype linguistic genotype (linguistic experience (linguistic phenotype (UG, LAD) (PLD) (e.g. Eng. Grammar) the enabling and the constraining powers of the importance of experience grammar acquisition = the growth of grammar The goal of linguistic theory The Principles and Parameters Theory a. Linguistic universals and language variations　Principles and parameters　Some examples X-bar theory and the head parameter Binding theory and the (putative) 挹eidinding domain　parameter Subjacency and the bounding node parameter Wh-movement parameter The pro drop parameter The null-topic parameter b. The organization of UG: the 揹-Model (the GB-Barriers model)　Subsystem of Rules: DS, SS, PF, LF, Move (, etc.　Subsystem of Principles: - X-bar theory - Theta theory - Case theory - binding theory - bounding theory - control theory - theory of government 扯 More recent development Pre-MP: from GB to Barriers UG principles (Minimalist program Parametric theory: macro- vs. micro-parameters lexical parameterization Beyond Plato扭 Problem: how did language evolve in humans? Three factors of language design: UG Experience The third factor computational efficiency, other cognitive modules, laws of nature, etc. The program: a goal Empirically, to explain the evolution question Theoretically, theoretical economy A few take-home diagnostic questions. 5A: Consider the following sentence: (i) The son of the Pharaoh 扭 daughter is the daughter of the Pharaoh扭 son. Does this sound like a false statement? How many possible ways are there to construe this sentence? Draw a tree diagram of the sentence that represents one of the necessarily (tautologically) true statements, using as much syntactic technology as you know well at your disposal. 5B: Consider the scenario that eagles each fish, and they can also fly helicopters. (a) What do eagles that fly eat? Possible answer: Fish. Impossible answer: *Helicopters. (b) What do eagles that eat fly? Possible answer: Helicopters. Impossible answer: *Fish Explain why each question has only one answer. Comment on the notion of structure dependence of grammatical operations that these sentences illustrate. 5C: For each sentence below, provide your judgment and then explain why this must be the case, using empty categories (PRO and traces) as needed. John wanted to defend him. i. Can John be the defendant? ii. Why or why not? Who did John want to defend him? i. Can John be the defendant, can he be the defender? ii. Why or why not? Who did John want to defend? i. Can John be the defender? The defendant? ii. Why or why not? *Who did John wanna defend him? i. Is the sentence grammatical for you? ii. Why or why not? Who did John wanna persuade to defend him? i. Can John be the defender? The defendant? ii. Why or why not? Who did John wanna persuade him to defend? i. Can John be the defender? The defendant? ii. Why or why not? Who did John want to persuade him to defend him? i. Can John be the defender? The defendant? ii. Why or why not? Huang. ¶ PAGE ¶1└　　←　,　B　V　W　　7 _

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