

The syntax of comparative constructions

Lehrkraft: Dr. Julia Bacskai-Atkari

Leistungspunkte: 6

Semester: Sommersemester 2019

Zeit: Donnerstag 10.00–11.30

Ort: F429

Description

The aim of this course is to provide an overview of the syntax of comparative constructions, introducing students to the most important issues concerning the topic that have been addressed in the literature from the 1970s onwards. Though all of these questions are strongly related to comparatives, we will see that providing an adequate answer to them has a bearing on other structures, too. In particular, we are going to discuss the structure of degree expressions, the phenomenon of Comparative Deletion, as well as the role of various optional ellipsis phenomena taking place in the subclause. While the main focus of this class is on English, the course takes a cross-linguistic perspective to highlight the particular properties of English. The classes will be taught in English.

Languages

- classes: English
- assignments: English
- end-term test: English
- contact: English or German (please choose the language you are more competent in)

Literature

Bacskai-Atkari, Julia. 2018. *Deletion phenomena in comparative constructions: English comparatives in a cross-linguistic perspective*. Berlin: Language Science Press.

There is one research article set for the reading assignment:

Reglero, Lara. 2006. Spanish subcomparatives: The “obligatory gapping” strategy’. In: Nuria Sagarra & Almeida Jacqueline Toribio (eds.) *Selected Proceedings of the 9th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, 67–78. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings.

Requirement: a reading assignment with tasks (30%), a short essay (ca. 5–7 pages) solving a syntactic problem related to comparatives (30%) and an end-term test (40%).

All assignments are to be submitted in English.

Note: the end-term test gives only 40% of the grade for the course: this also means that receiving a 5.0 for the test does not automatically result in failing the course. However, the end-term test **must** be taken: not taking the end-term test results in failing the course.

The reading assignment and the essay must be submitted in English. The end-term test is to be taken in English.

Preliminary schedule:

18.04.2019	Introduction
25.04.2019	The structure of degree expressions I
02.05.2019	The structure of degree expressions II
09.05.2019	Comparative Deletion I
16.05.2019	Comparative Deletion II
23.05.2019	“CONSOLIDATION WEEK”*
06.06.2019	Attributive Comparative Deletion I
13.06.2019	Attributive Comparative Deletion II
27.06.2019	Lower copies and movement chains I
04.07.2019	Lower copies and movement chains II
11.07.2019	Ellipsis without Comparative Deletion
18.07.2019	Test

*: There is no class this week; this is the time when the reading assignment should be completed. However, an alternative appointment will be offered in June or July (for revision).