

**Course:** LIN 621 Temporal Semantics  
**Term:** Spring 2005  
**Instructor:** Bohnemeyer  
**Text:** Primary readings on reserve

**Overview:** This course provides an introduction to the analysis of temporal reference in natural languages. Core areas to be covered include lexical and viewpoint aspect, absolute and relative tense, time adverbials, and temporal relations in discourse (or “temporal anaphora” phenomena). There will be a strong emphasis on crosslinguistic data. We will assemble an eclectic set of analytical tools from across contemporary approaches to time semantics, with the objective of

**Goals:** This course is directed at students with an interest in problems of linguistic temporality and a background in descriptive linguistics, historical linguistics, language typology, first or second language acquisition research, formal semantics and/or computational linguistics. Its aim is to provide a basic training in the analysis of time reference and the semantics of tense-mood-aspect systems of natural languages. The emphasis will be on the analysis of data from a variety of both European and Non-Indo-European languages. The discussion of theories and frameworks will be subjected to this goal and hence remain eclectic. Each unit will start from a set of analytical puzzles that we will attempt to resolve in the course of the session, and conclude with a set of training exercises.

**Prerequisites:** LIN415/515 (Syntax I); LIN438/538 (Semantics I)

**Meetings:** MWF 11:00-11:50 684 Baldy

**Instructor:** Dr. Jürgen Bohnemeyer – Office 627 Baldy Phone 645-2177 ext. 727  
E-mail [jb77@buffalo.edu](mailto:jb77@buffalo.edu) Office hours MW 13:00-14:00

**Coursework:** Every student is expected to present a 20-to-30-minutes oral summary of one of the readings listed on the syllabus in class, based on a handout elaborated by the student. In addition, every student will be assigned a project involving data collection with the Tense-Mood-Aspect Questionnaire of Dahl (1985) and/or the Tempest clips of Bohnemeyer (1998) and write-up of a 10-to-20-pages summary of the results. The overall grade will be computed as follows:

- Literature presentation, including handout – 35%
- Data collection project, including analysis, comparison, and report – 50%
- Overall participation – 15%.

**Syllabus** Under construction!

**Part I: Basic concepts**

**Week 1:** Intro; temporality in lexical vs. referential semantics

**Reading:** Klein 1994: ch. 1-2; Smith 1991: ch. 1

**Week 2:** Building blocks: events, times, reference points

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 2002: 20-28; 44-49; Dowty 1979: 133-150, Klein 1994: ch. 4;  
**optional/advanced:** Bohnemeyer 1998a: 42-56; 87-97; Kamp & Reyle 1993: 483-510;  
Partee 1984

**Part II: Aspect**

**Week 3:** Event structure and lexical aspect

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 2002: 28-37; Dowty 1979: 71-90; Smith 1991: 17-58;  
**optional & advanced:** Comrie 1976: ch. 2; Dowty 1979: 37-70; Smith 1991: 315-327,  
369-387; Smith 1996

**Week 4:** Lexical aspect and *aktionsart*

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 2004: 71-75; Smith 1991: 39-58, 241-250; Klein 1995;  
**optional & advanced:** Filip 1999: tba.; Freed 1979: 47-63

**Week 5:** Lexical aspect and *aktionsart* (Cont.); Viewpoint aspect

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 1998: 71-86; Klein 1994: ch.5; Krifka 1992  
**optional & advanced:** Bohnemeyer 2002: 38-44; Chung & Timberlake 1985: 213-240;  
Dahl 1985: ch. 3; Smith 1991: 61-92

**Week 6:** Viewpoint aspect (Cont.)

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer & Swift 2004; Portner 1998  
**optional & advanced:** Bohnemeyer 2002: 44-51; Comrie 1985: ch. 2; Klein 1994: ch. 6

**Part III: From aspect to tense**

**Week 7:** Viewpoint aspect vs. relative tense

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 2003b; Comrie 1976: 52-65; Klein 1994: ch. 7  
**optional & advanced:** Chung & Timberlake 1985: 209-213; Comrie 1985: ch. 3; Dahl  
1985: ch. 5; Mufwene 1990

**\*\*\* SPRING BREAK Mo Mar 14 till Fr Mar 18 \*\*\***

**Week 8:** Aspect vs. relative tense: Perfect and prospective; Types of perfect

**Reading:** Comrie 1976: ch. 3; Klein 1994: ch. 7; Ogihara 1999

**Week 9:** Types of perfect (Cont.); Metrical tense; Sequence-of-tense phenomena

**Reading:** Comrie 1985: ch. 5; Dahl 1985: 120-128; Dahl (1985: 103-112);  
**optional & advanced:** Ogihara 1996: ch.1

## Part IV: Modality and future time reference

**Week 10:** Term projects; Sequence of tense (Cont.); Modal attitudes of future time reference

**Reading:** Portner 1997; Bybee, Pagliuca, & Perkins 1991  
**optional & advanced:** Bohnemeyer 1998a: 313-330, 366-398

**Week 11:** Modal attitudes of future time reference (Cont.); diagnosing future tenses; future time reference in tenseless languages

**Reading:** Chafe 1995; Mithun 1995  
**optional & advanced:** Chung & Timberlake 1985: 241-255; Fleischman 1982: ch. 4, 6

## Part V: Time relations in discourse

**Week 12:** Temporal anaphora in Discourse Representation Theory

**Reading:** Hinrichs 1986; Kamp & Rohrer 1983; Partee 1984  
**optional & advanced:** Kamp & Reyle 1993: 521-534

**Week 13:** The pragmatics of temporal anaphora; temporal connective constructions

**Reading:** Bohnemeyer 2000  
**optional & advanced:** Bohnemeyer 1998a: ch. 11, 1998b

\*\*\* DATA COLLECTION PROJECTS DUE Mo Apr 26! \*\*\*

**Week 14:** The typology of tense-mood-aspect systems; tenselessness

**Reading:** Bhat 1999: tba.; Bittner in press

\*\*\* Last day of classes Monday May 2nd! \*\*\*

### Reading list<sup>1</sup>

- Aksu-Koç, A. (1988). *The acquisition of aspect and modality: The case of past reference in Turkish*. Cambridge (etc.): Cambridge University Press.
- Allen, J.F. (1983). Maintaining Knowledge about Temporal Intervals. *Communications of the ACM* 26: 832-843.
- Andersen, R.W. (1990). Papiamentu Tense-Aspect, with Special Attention to Discourse. In J. V. Singler (Ed.), *Pidgin and creole tense-mood-aspect systems*. Amsterdam etc.: Benjamins (Creole Language Library; 6). 59-96.
- Antinucci, F. & Miller, R. (1976). How children talk about what happened. *Journal of Child Language* 3: 167-189.

<sup>1</sup> All books have been or are being put on reserve, and all chapters and articles have been or are being made downloadable. Published chapters/articles can be downloaded from the UB library web site; unpublished articles/chapters can be downloaded from the Blackboard system/UBlearns. The references include additional readings not listed on the syllabus.

- Bartsch, R. (1986). On Aspectual Properties of Dutch and German Nominalizations. In V. Lo Cascio & C. Vet (Eds.), *Temporal Structure in Sentence and Discourse*. Dordrecht etc.: Foris (Groningen-Amsterdam Studies in Semantics, 5). 7-39.
- Bertinetto, P.M. (1994). Statives, progressives, and habituais: analogies and differences. *Linguistics* 32: 391-423.
- Bhat, D. N. S. (1999). *The prominence of tense, aspect, and mood*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Bittner, M. (in press). Future discourse in a tenseless language. *Journal of Semantics*
- Bohnemeyer, J. (1998[a]). *Time Relations in Discourse. Evidence from a comparative approach to Yucatec Maya*. PhD thesis. Tilburg: Katholieke Universiteit Brabant.
- (1998[b]). Temporal reference from a radical pragmatics perspective: Why Yucatec does not need to express 'after' and 'before'. *Cognitive Linguistics* 9/3: 239-282.
- (2000). Event order in language and cognition. In H. de Hoop & T. van der Wouden (Eds.), *Linguistics in the Netherlands, 17*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 1-16.
- (2002). *The grammar of time reference in Yucatek Maya*. Munich: LINCUM.
- . (2003a). Invisible time lines in the fabric of events: Temporal coherence in Yucatec narratives. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 13: 139-162.
- (2003b). Relative tense vs. aspect: The case reopened. Paper presented at SULA 2: Semantics of Under-Represented Languages in the Americas. Vancouver: March.
- (2004). Split intransitivity, linking, and lexical representation: the case of Yucatek Maya. *Linguistics* 42: 67-107.
- Bohnemeyer, J. & M. D. Swift (2004). Event realization and default aspect. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27: 263-296.
- Bolinger, D.L. (1968). Postposed Main Phrases: An English Rule for the Romance Subjunctive. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 14: 3-30.
- Breu, W. (1985). Handlungsgrenzen als Grundlage der Verbklassifikation. In W. Lehfeld (Ed.), *Slavistische Linguistik 1984*. München: Otto Sagner. 9-34.
- Breu, W. (1994). Interactions between lexical, temporal and aspectual meanings. *Studies in Language* 18: 23-44.
- Bricker, V.R., Po'ot Yah, E., & Dzul de Po'ot, O. (1998). *A Dictionary of The Maya Language As Spoken in Hocobá, Yucatán*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- Bybee, J.L. (1985). *Morphology. A Study of the Relation between Meaning and Form*. Amsterdam etc.: Benjamins.
- Bybee, J.L., Pagliuca, W. & Perkins, R.D. (1991). Back to the Future. In E.C. Traugott & B. Heine (Eds.), *Approaches to Grammaticalization. Vol. II: Focus on Types of Grammatical Markers*. Amsterdam etc.: Benjamins (Typological Studies in Language; 19 (2)). 17-58.
- Bybee, J.L., Pagliuca, W. & Perkins, R.D. (1994). *The evolution of grammar: tense, aspect, and modality in the languages of the world*. Chicago etc.: University of Chicago Press.
- Chafe, W.L. (1995). The Realis-Irrealis Distinction in Caddo, the Northern Iroquoian Languages, and English. In J. Bybee & S. Fleischman (Eds.), *Modality in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam etc.: Benjamins. 349-365.
- Chung, S. & Timberlake, A. (1985). Tense, aspect, and mood. In T. Shopen (Ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description. Vol. III. Grammatical categories and the lexicon*. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press. 202-258.
- Comrie, B. (1976). *Aspect. An introduction to the study of verbal aspect and related problems*. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press.
- Comrie, B. (1981). On Reichenbach's Approach to Tense. In C.S. Masek & M.F. Miller (Eds.), *Papers from the Seventeenth Regional Meeting, Chicago Linguistic Society*. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society. 24-30.
- Comrie, B. (1985). *Tense*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dahl, Ö. (1985). *Tense and Aspect Systems*. Oxford etc.: Blackwell.
- Dowty, D.R. (1979). *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar. The Semantics of Verbs and Times in Generative Semantics and in Montague's PTQ*. Dordrecht etc.: Reidel.
- Filip, H. (1999). *Aspect, Eventuality Types, and Noun Phrase Semantics*. NY: Garland.
- Fleischman, S. (1982). *The future in thought and language. Diachronic evidence from Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freed, A. (1979). *The Semantics of English Aspectual Complementation*. Dordrecht: Reidel.

- Hinrichs, E. (1986). Temporal Anaphora in Discourses of English. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 9: 63-82.
- Kamp, H. & Reyle, U. (1993). *From Discourse to Logic. Introduction to Modeltheoretic Semantics of Natural Language, Formal Logic and Discourse Representation Theory*. 2 vols. Dordrecht etc.: Kluwer.
- Kamp, H. & Rohrer, C. (1983). Tense in Texts. In R. Bäuerle, C. Schwartz & A. von Stechow (Eds.), *Meaning, Use, and Interpretation of Language*. Berlin: de Gruyter. 250-269.
- Klein, W. (1994). *Time in language*. London etc.: Routledge.
- (1995). A Time-Relational Analysis of Russian Aspect. *Language* 71: 669-695.
- Mithun, M. (1995). On the Relativity of Irreality. In J. Bybee & S. Fleischman (Eds.), *Modality in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam etc.: Benjamins. 367-388.
- Ogihara, T. (1996). *Tense, Attitudes, and Scope*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- (1999). The Semantics of Tense and Aspect in Japanese. In N. Tsujimura (ed.), *The Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*. London: Blackwell. 326-348.
- Partee, B. (1984). Nominal and Temporal Anaphora. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 7: 243-86.
- Portner, P. (1997). The Semantics of Mood, Complementation, and Conversational Force", *Natural Language Semantics* 5: 167-212.
- (1998). The Progressive in Modal Semantics. *Language* 74(4): 760-787.
- Smith, C.S. (1991). *The Parameter of Aspect*. Dordrecht etc.: Kluwer.
- Smith, C.S. (1996). Aspectual Categories of Navajo. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 62(3): 227-263.