

Experimental Syntax with East Asian Languages *Syllabus*

Meeting Time and Location:

Tuesdays 3:00-5:30
Moore 206

Instructor:

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Office hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The major goals of this course are to:

- (i) critically assess the role of acceptability judgments in syntactic research and theory
- (ii) learn the standard procedures for acceptability judgment experiments
- (iii) critically survey the existing literature on various syntactic phenomena in East Asian languages (e.g., Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and Korean) that took experimental approaches to them
- (iv) develop a research project that addresses a well-defined research question on a syntactic issue in East Asian languages and their speakers through an experiment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS**1. Attendance and participation**

- Attend the class and participate in discussion regularly.
- Everyone is expected to lead discussion of one of the papers that we will read in this course. You will have a chance to pick a paper in the first several weeks.

2. Assignments

- There are two types of reading assignments: (i) chapters from Discovering Statistics Using R (DSUR) and (ii) syntax papers that are journal articles or book chapters.
- DSUR has a companion website: <https://studysites.sagepub.com/dsur/main.htm>
- Reading assignments will be accompanied by discussion questions and mini-homework.
- You are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and done discussion questions and/or mini homework, and be prepared to discuss them in class.
- Please turn them into me as e-mail attachments after class.

3. R

- We will use a free statistical software R (<https://www.r-project.org/>) to process and analyze data and make figures. Please bring a laptop to class if you have one. If you do not own a laptop that you can bring to class every week, please let me know.

4. Research Project

- You are expected to develop a research project through the following process:
 - 1) **Brief description of the proposed project:** Submit a brief research proposal that describes a syntactic phenomenon that you would like to investigate. The only restriction on your proposal is that it must have an East Asian component (e.g., it involves a phenomenon that is observed in an East Asian language; it targets speakers of East Asian language, etc.) [**Due Week 8**]
 - 2) **Mini presentation:** Give a 8-10 minutes presentation about your proposed research project. The presentation should include (i) a description of the phenomenon, (ii) discussion of relevant literature, (iii) a well-defined research question, and (iv) a discussion of preliminary ideas for a possible experiment. [**Week 10**]
 - 3) **Final presentation:** Give a 20 minutes presentation of your research project. It should discuss (i) relevant literature, (ii) your research question and relevant hypotheses, (iii) a proposed acceptability experiment and (iv) preferably results of a pilot study. [**Weeks 15 and 16**].

4) **Write-up:** Submit a write-up of your research project. [**Due at the end finals week**].

GRADING:

Participation	20%
Reading questions/Mini homework	20%
Proposal	10%
Mini presentation	5%
Final presentation	10%
Write-up	30%

Student Learning Outcomes:

By completing this course, students will become familiar with the history of acceptability judgements as empirical evidence in syntactic research in general and in syntactic research with East Asian languages specifically, and will become able to design and conduct a research project that addresses a syntactic issue using an acceptability judgment experiment and read papers on syntactic issues that approach their research questions through different experimental methods.

(Very) Tentative Schedule

week	topic	reading assignments for the following week
1 (8/27)	Introduction: Why experimental syntax?	Gibson & Fedorenko 2013 DSUR: Ch.1 and Ch.2
2 (9/3)	Why formal acceptability judgment experiments?	Sprouse & Almeida 2013 Cowart 1997: Ch.1 and Ch.2 DSUR: Ch.3
3 (9/10)	Doing an acceptability judgment experiment I	Cowart 1997: Ch. 3 and Ch. 4 DSUR: Ch.4
4 (9/17)	Doing an acceptability judgment experiment II	Sprouse 2011 Coward 1997: Ch. 6 DSUR: Ch.5
5 (9/24)	Doing an acceptability judgment experiment III	Sprouse & Almeida 2017 DSUR: Ch.7
6 (10/1)	Doing an acceptability judgment experiment IV	Sorace & Shomura 2001 Law & Yuen 2010
7 (10/8)	Experimental Syntax in East Asian Languages I: <i>Split intransitivity</i>	Han et al. 2007 Scontras et al. 2017
8 (10/15)	Experimental Syntax in East Asian Languages II: <i>Quantifier scope</i>	Tanaka & Schwartz 2018 Lu et al. 2019
9 (10/22)	Experimental Syntax in East Asian Languages III: <i>Wh-in-situ</i>	No reading - Prepare for your presentation!
10 (10/29)	Mini presentations	Kim 2019
11 (11/5)	Experimental Syntax in East Asian Languages IV: <i>Anaphora</i>	
12 (11/12)	TBD	TBA
13 (11/19)	TBD	TBA
14 (11/26)	TBD	TBA
15 (12/3)	Final presentations	
16 (12/10)	Final presentations	
Finals Week *a write-up of your research project due by December 20.		

DSUR = Discovering Statistics Using R