

Nominative and Ergative Languages: Syntax

BBN-ANG17-342/139

Instructor: Irina Burukina

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When & where: Fri 09:00–10:30. Synchronous online course. Canvas. MS Teams.

1 Overview

The course aims to compare various syntactic phenomena related to argument structure and case assignment in nominative and ergative languages.

This course is **not** a basic syntax seminar. The students are expected not to be afraid of syntactic tree structures and to already know what the following terms mean: *constituent*, *phrase*, *thematic role*, *argument*, *adjunct*, *subject*, *direct object*, *NP*, *VP*, *TP/IP*.

2 Schedule

This is a preliminary schedule of the course. Changes to it will be announced in class.

For each class there is a handout (uploaded to Canvas).

Date	Topic
11/09	Revision. Background check
18/09	Cases. Nominative and accusative
25/09	University Sport Day (no classes)
02/10	Cases. Ergative and absolutive
09/10	Ergative as an inherent Case
16/10	Dependent Case theory
23/10	Republic Day, national holiday (no classes)
30/10	Autumn break (no classes)
6/11	Voices
13/11	A-bar movement
20/11	Syntactic Ergativity
27/11	Split Ergativity
4/12	Revision
11/12	Essay consultation

3 Requirements

At the end of the term, students are expected to write a **short essay**. You can either (i) pick up one of the questions that I will give you by the end of the course and address it, or (ii) present and discuss some relevant examples from a language not considered in class.

Attendance: No more than three absences will be tolerated. **If you need to skip more than three classes, notify me about this via email.**

4 Readings

The required material will be summarized in handouts.

You are also advised to take a look at *The Oxford Handbook of Ergativity*, 2017, edited by Jessica Coon, Diane Massam, and Lisa Demena Travis (esp. the *Introduction* and the chapters by Mark C. Baker & Jonathan David Bobaljik and Maria Polinsky).

5 Where to find the course

The course materials will be uploaded to **Canvas**:

<https://canvas.elte.hu/belepes/>

Since this is an online course, we will have regular online meetings. You are expected to attend these meetings, as usual. All registered students will receive a message via Neptun and Canvas with detailed instructions by the beginning of the term.

6 Other

Dr. Irina Burukina. Contact e-mail address: irine-bu@caesar.elte.hu

Please, use only this email address to send me emails. Do not forget to add your name and indicate your group.

If you have any questions, I'd be happy to meet with you. Please, send me an email in advance to schedule an appointment; we can meet either at ELTE or via Zoom.