

Introduction to Linguistics

L1S2 DEPA EL22LINC (2017-2018)

Vendredi 09-12h00, B004

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Description

How is possible that you can speak your language so well yet struggle with learning other languages? Why is a baby apparently able to learn any language in the world perfectly yet as adults it is so difficult? How is that you know, just be “feeling”, that something is “correct” or “incorrect” in your mother tongue? How is it possible for you to distinguish the sounds that make up words when everyone speaks so differently? How is it we understand each other when we speak about things that the person we speak to has never seen? Where did languages come from? How do they influence our societies? Do different languages influence the way we think?

The list of questions that have yet to be answered about the nature of language is enormous. We still do not know the answers to these questions and finding the answers is the science of language, or simply linguistics. This course offers an introduction and overview of the field of language science and the questions it seeks to answer. The course will be mainly theoretical but since linguistics is an empirical science, certain tools and methods will be introduced as well. A familiarity with the tools and methods as well an understanding of the questions we seek to answer will form the basis of the linguistics curriculum in DEPA.

Aims

By the end of the course, students will have a broad understanding of field of language science. Specifically, the students will have:

- i. theoretical understanding of fundamental questions and problems of the field
- ii. practical experience with some of the tools used in the field

Reading

Will be supplied in electronic format, distributed via the site.

Slides will be provided each week. However, remember that the slides do not contain the content of the course, they are an outline of the discussion in class, no more. If you do not take notes, do exercises, and read the material that supports the classes, you will not pass the course. On your computer, create a folder for the course and keep all your notes, readings and the class slides there.

Evaluation

2 home tasks, 5% each

2 class tests, 20% each

1 class exam, 50%

Requirements

Access to a computer running under Mac or Windows

Outline

Part 1

Phoneme – Morpheme – Lexeme

What we do know: The building blocks of languages

- 1. Semiotics and Phonetics** 25 Jan.
- a. The *form-meaning pair* and fundamental questions of language science
- b. **Phonetic features** and the places and manners of articulation
Key Names: Aristotle, Socrates, Ferdinand De Saussure; Charles Peirce
Reading: The Sounds of Language, Chapter 3, from Yule (on web site)
N.B.: Download and install PRAAT (info on web site)
- 2. Phonology and Prosodic structure** 01 Feb.
- a. The construct of *phoneme* and prosodic structures of English
- b. The spectrogram and acoustic analysis
Key names: Nikolai Trubetzkoy, Morris Halle; M.A.K. Halliday
N.B.: Bring laptops – *at least* one between 3 people
- 3. Morphology and Paradigmatic Structure** 08 Feb.
- a. The construct of *morpheme* and *partes orationis* - derivational rules
- b. **Grammatical features** and the paradigm - inflectional rules
Key names – Port Royal, Roman Jakobson
N.B. Submit first home task – studentwork.glynnp8@gmail.com (5%)
- 4. Morphology and Grammatical Categories** 15 Feb.
- a. *Case, Number, Gender* and the grammatical categories of noun phrases
- b. *Tense, Mood, Aspect* and the grammatical categories of verb phrases
Key names: Pāṇini; Wilhelm von Humboldt; Alexandra Aikhenvald
Reading: Morphology, Chapter 6, from Yule (on web site)
- 5. Lexicology and Semantic Structure** 22 Feb.
- a. The construct of *lexeme* and syntagmatic-paradigmatic relations
- b. **Semantic features** and semasiological-onomasiological structure
Key names: Herman Paul; Michel Bréal; Jost Trier; Eugenio Coşeriu
N.B.: Test on Semiotics, Phonetics, Phonology and Morphology (classes 1-4) (20%)

Part 2
Grammar – Cognition – Society
What we don't know: Rule vs. Pattern, Form vs. Meaning

6 – Signification and Categorisation

- a. Primitive, Formal and Encyclopaedic Semantics – universality vs. truth vs. context
- b. Designata and Denotata – Conceptualisation and Representation
Key names: Gottfried Leibniz; Richard Montague; George Lakoff
Reading: Semantics, Chapter 9, from Yule (on web site)
N.B.: Download and install AntConc (info on web site)

7 - Pragmatics and Discourse

- a. Speech Acts, Implicature and communicative maxims
- b. Collocation and Syntagmatic distribution
Key names: Paul Grice; John Searle, John Firth, John Sinclair
N.B.: Bring laptops – *at least* one between 3 people

8 - Formal Syntax and Phrase Structure Rules

- a. *Grammaticality* and form-driven, rule-based *grammar*
- b. Phrase structure, syntagmatic rules, government, and movement
Key names – Ferdinand De Saussure, Noam Chomsky
N.B. Submit second home task – studentwork.glynnp8@gmail.com (5%)

9 - Functional Syntax and Argument Structure Constructions

- a. *Grammaticality* and meaning-driven, usage-based *grammar*
- b. Constructions, arguments, semantic frames and paradigmatic patterns
Key names: Wilhelm von Humboldt; Charles Fillmore; Ronald Langacker
Reading: Syntax, Chapter 8, from Yule (on web site)

Part 3
Society – History – Evolution
Language and Languages in the World

10 – Sociolinguistics and Critical Theory

- a. Variation (dialect, sociolect and idiolect) - tribalism and individualism
- b. Diaglossia and Linguistic Relativity
Key names: William Labov; M.A.K. Halliday; Edward Sapir
N.B. Test on Lexicology, Semantics, and Syntax (classes 5-9) (20%)

11. Language Evolution and Genealogy

- a. The origins of *langage* and the origins of the world's *langues*
- b. Language families, sisters, mothers and daughters of the world
Reading: Evolution, Chapter 1, from Yule (on web site)

12. History of English and European Family

- a. PIE, the origins and the contemporary relationships of the European language family
- b. English, a bastard child of the Germanic family

13. Test and Wrap Up

- a. Covering unfinished material
- b. Final test on entire course (classes 1-12) (50%)