

Formal approaches to natural language

1. Course Description

a. Title of a Course

Formal approaches to natural language

b. Pre-requisites

Introduction to Linguistics

c. Course Type (compulsory, elective, optional)

Compulsory

d. Abstract

The course covers different topics in the formal studies of syntax, morphology and semantics, focusing on the generative framework as the most influential one in this domain. The course goes over a wide range of linguistic phenomena highlighting major debates in the field, advantages and disadvantages of formal approaches (in general and in their different varieties) and giving a wider perspective on their role in the study of various phenomena. A brief introduction is followed by several in-depth case studies selected to represent the foundational principles and questions of the formal approaches to natural language.

2. Learning Objectives

The goal of the course is to introduce students to the methodology of formal grammar and semantics and to the major questions that these frameworks seek to answer; to discuss linguistic phenomena that played a crucial role for these frameworks; to teach students how to use up-to-date conceptual apparatus, methods and argumentation in these domains.

3. Learning Outcomes

After completing the course, the student should:

- understand the complexity and diversity of formal syntactic and semantic models, and what types of data and argumentation they rely on;
- be able to analyze sentence structure using different formal methods.

4. Course Plan

1. The basics of generative grammar
2. Non-local dependencies
3. Modality, tense, aspect
4. The structure of noun phrases
5. Predicate-argument structure
6. The structure of relative clauses

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7. Information structure
 8. Quantifiers
 9. Negative and positive polarity items

5. Reading List

a. Required

1. Carnie, A. *Syntax: A Generative Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006 [separate chapters]. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=836603> — ЭБС ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete.
2. Zimmermann, T.E., Sternefeld, W. *Introduction to Semantics*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2013 [separate chapters]. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1121618> — ЭБС ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete.

b. Optional

1. Alexiadou, A., Kiss, T. *Syntax: Theory and Analysis*. Vols 1, 2. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2015 [separate chapters] — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1867211> — ЭБС ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete.
2. Reinhart, T. *Interface Strategies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006 [separate chapters] — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3338598> — ЭБС ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete.
3. Cinque, G. *Adverbs and Functional Heads: A Cross-linguistic Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999 [separate chapters] — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3052067> — ЭБС ProQuest Ebook Central - Academic Complete.

6. Grading System

The final grade is calculated on the basis of: homeworks (50%) and the final exam (50%).

7. Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment

A student is expected:

- to submit homeworks on time, to explain proposed solutions to the tasks clearly;
- to know the main linguistics facts and concepts discussed during the lectures, to be able to use the methods of analysis;
- to be able to discuss the articles assigned for home reading.

8. Methods of Instruction

Lectures, seminars (including discussions, learning and applying different methods of analysis) and out-of-class work (under the guidance of the lecturer; it is possible to consult with the lecturer via the LMS

system or by e-mail). In-class work: 60% or more should be interactive (working in groups, team discussions).

9. Special Equipment and Software Support (if required)

A projector, a whiteboard.