

# Introduction to Linguistics (I)

Type of course: BA.AA.SW01 (**first part** of *Basismodul Linguistics*)  
 Time: Group 4: Thursday 10–12 a.m. (10:15–11:45)  
 Group 5: Thursday 12–2 p.m. (12:15–13:45)  
 Venue: Carl-Zeiss-Str. 3, SR 209  
 Workload: **5 ECTS**



## Course description

This course introduces first-year students to the discipline of modern linguistics ('Sprachwissenschaft'), and specifically sets out to discover some foundational principles that underlie the structural organisation of the English language. We will take a closer look at the 'building blocks' of language, at the internal structure of words and larger units (phrases, clauses, sentences) and at the ways in which grammatical forms serve specific communicative functions. At the end of the course, students will have developed an understanding of the role that grammar plays in language and will have acquired some methodological tools for describing and representing the structure of English words and sentences.

All information on the organisation of the course is provided in the **welcome materials** available on *Moodle*. The cornerstones are summarised again here:

## Requirements and marking system

- Thorough preparation of each session (obligatory reading and a homework assignment each week)
- Regular attendance and active class participation
- Submission of three homework assignments (**one from each phase of the course**, see table on the right)
- Final exam

The final mark of this part of the module will be based on the **exam**. In order to be able to *enrol* for the exam, however, you have to submit and **pass** at least **three** of your **homework assignments** during the semester.

## Preparatory texts, assignments and classes

The course is based on obligatory **preparatory texts** (weekly chapters in a **course reader**). The reader (*Discovering Language, Part I*) is downloadable from *Moodle* as a **PDF**; please print it if possible. No further literature is required for the course, although we will provide many reading suggestions for interested students as we go along.

The **seminar** is essentially a platform for discussing your understanding of the texts; we will systematise certain aspects of the texts and focus on selected problem areas, but we will not go through the chapters bit by bit (this is your preparatory task!). The **assignments** ensure your continuous progress during the course and present you with exercises designed to practise exam-style problems and skills.

## The course management systems

- **Friedolin**: enrolment in the course as such and registration for the final exam
- **Moodle**: the central learning platform for this class (all materials and assignments, links to screencasts, announcements by email (please check your account regularly for messages))
- **Zoom**: our meeting ground for office hours (please make an appointment by email) and a fallback option for online teaching

# Course programme

DATE	TOPIC	CENTRAL QUESTIONS	HA
	<b>Welcome materials: Introduction to the course</b>	What am I going to learn in this course? How does it fit in with the rest of my studies? What am I required to do in this course?	
1 20.10.22	Introduction to the world of language(s)		
2 27.10.22	<b>Foundations of (English) linguistics:</b> The many facets of language and the branches of linguistics	What does a linguist do, and what kinds of question is s/he interested in? How does a linguist investigate language?	HA1
3 03.11.22	<b>Foundations of human language:</b> Signs, 'grammar' and 'rules' in language	In which way is language a 'sign' system? Why is it useful and natural for a language to have 'grammar'?	HA2
4 10.11.22	<b>Sounds and sound systems:</b> Phones, phonemes and allophones	What kinds of sounds are there in English? Which contribution do sounds make to language structure?	HA3
5 17.11.22	<b>The structure of words:</b> Types of morphemes and their functions   Contextual shapes of morphemes (allomorphy)	How are words structured, and how and why is the shape of words determined by the contexts in which they occur?	HA4
6 24.11.22	<b>Lexical and grammatical morphology:</b> Word-formation processes and inflection	How can new words be added to the vocabulary of English? What grammatical forms do these words appear in?	HA5
7 01.12.22	<b>Practice session on morphology</b>		
8 08.12.22	<b>From morphology to syntax:</b> Constituent structure, syntactic categorisation, syntactic functions	What are the central syntactic building blocks of English and the principles according to which they work?	HA6
9 15.12.22	<b>Word classes:</b> Survey of the open and closed word classes of English	How and why do native speakers of English sort words into different categories? What are the distinctive properties of nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. in English?	HA7
10 05.01.23	<b>Phrases:</b> Constituency tests and different types of phrase.	How do speakers combine words to form sentences? How can we conduct a linguistic analysis of sentence structure?	HA8
11 12.01.23	<b>Syntactic functions in the clause</b>	What kinds of function do constituents perform in sentences?	HA9
12 19.01.23	<b>The clause patterns of English:</b> Valency and transitivity of clauses	What are the characteristic syntactic patterns of English clauses?	HA10
13 26.01.23	<b>Clause combinations:</b> Formal and functional types of complex sentence	What devices does the English language have for relating two (or more) events to one another in a single sentence?	HA11
14 02.02.23	<b>Practice session on syntax</b>		
15 09.02.23	<b>Review and conclusion</b>	Bring any open questions to class, and do not hesitate to ask them!	
	<b>Final exam</b> Thursday, 16 February 2023, 10–12 a.m., venue to be announced		
	<b>Retake exam</b> Thursday, 16 March 2023, 10–12 a.m., venue to be announced		