

Academic Year/course: 2022/23

32286 - Argumentation in Linguistic Analysis

Syllabus Information

Academic Course: 2022/23

Academic Center: 803 - Masters Centre of the Department of Translation and Language Sciences

Study: 8039 - Master in Discourse Studies: Communication, Society and Learning

Subject: 32286 - Argumentation in Linguistic Analysis

Credits: 5.0

Course: 1

Teaching languages:

Theory: Group 1: English

Teachers: Alexandre Alsina Keith

Teaching Period: Second Quarter

Schedule:

Presentation

The main goal of the course is to enable the student to evaluate analyses in linguistics, to present arguments for or against a specific theoretical proposal, and, ultimately, to develop solid well-grounded analyses in the subfield of linguistics in which she/he is going to carry out her/his research. More specific goals are: understanding the concepts of analysis, theory, and framework in linguistics, knowing and applying the evaluation criteria for theories, being able to derive the predictions of a theory, etc.

Learning outcomes

The student should acquire the following abilities:

- The ability to make generalizations over linguistic data;
- the ability to distinguish linguistic facts, descriptive concepts and theoretical concepts;
- the ability to deduce the predictions of a theory;
- the ability to propose a theory that makes the necessary predictions to explain the linguistic facts;
- the ability to choose among different theories or variants of a theory.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

Contents

This course is organized into 10 3-hour sessions with the following contents (not listed in the order of presentation):

- The concept of analysis in linguistics.
- The concepts of theory and theoretical framework; conceptual framework and formal framework.
- Argumentation: how do you argue for the acceptance or rejection of a theoretical concept, an analysis, a principle, a representation, etc.?
- Criteria that theories must satisfy; criteria for choosing among theories; Occam's razor; evaluation of theoretical alternatives.
- Predictions, counterexamples, unexplained data.
- Data and object of inquiry of linguistics. What can the data be, depending on the object of inquiry?

Teaching Methods

In class we will alternate presentation sections, in which the teacher presents new material, and discussion sections, in which the proposals and examples contributed by the students are debated. A large part of the course will be devoted to the critical analysis of three articles, on the basis of the students' contributions.

Evaluation

The course assessment has a component of continual evaluation, based on the homework submitted during the trimester and on participation in classroom discussions, and a component based on the final exam, with a 50% weight for each component. The exam will consist in practical exercises similar to those worked out in class during the course. The use and consultation of any written material is allowed in the exam.

Bibliography and information resources

Alsina, Alex. 2011. What is an analysis, or explanation, in formal linguistics? Manuscript in electronic format.

Mohanan, K. P. 1997. *Foundations of Theoretical Linguistics*. Manuscript.