



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Kodas
Linguistic diversity and language science	

Annotation
<p>The course is intended as an introduction to the linguistic diversity of the world as well as to the related problems of language variation and linguistic universals. It addresses questions like: how many languages are currently spoken across the globe? how are languages similar, how are they different, and why? are there "older" and "younger" languages, and are there "simple" and "complex" languages? These questions lead up to the core issues of contemporary linguistic theory, which will be discussed with due attention to how the competing currents of linguistic thought attempt to account for the rise and nature of human linguistic competence. Finally, the course will try to convey the experience of linguistic fieldwork and linguistic analysis.</p>

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: dist. prof. Axel Holvoet Lecturers: dr. Vladimir Panov	Faculty of Philology, Centre for General Linguistics

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
First	General university studies

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face to face (lectures, seminars)	Spring semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: proficiency in English at B2 level enabling the attendants to read literature, join discussions and perform assignments is required. No specific background in linguistics is expected.	Additional requirements (if any):

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	130	48	82

Purpose of the course unit (module)		
<p>Aim of the course is to develop knowledge about linguistic diversity and how it is accounted for in contemporary linguistics, as well as to serve as an introduction to the fundamental discussions in contemporary linguistic theory and the most popular domains of linguistic research. It should also, through reading, team work and discussion in groups, develop skills in solving tasks of linguistic analysis at a basic level.</p>		
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning - methods	Assessment methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will know the core topics of contemporary language science, will understand the basis of how language works, how linguistics relates to other disciplines, and will be able to discuss these issues with colleagues 	Lectures, seminars, autonomous work.	Mini-essays; midterm test and final test (exam).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will know prominent structural features of the languages of the major world regions. 	Lectures, seminars, autonomous work.	Mini-essays; midterm and final tests.

- Students will be able to use available online resources on linguistic diversity, use descriptive grammar and analyze primary linguistic data through problem solving.	Lectures, seminars, autonomous work including linguistic problem solving.	Mini-essays; midterm test and final test (exam).
- Students will be able to analyze and critically evaluate public discourse related to language and linguistics.	Lectures, seminars, autonomous work.	Mini-essays; midterm test and final test (exam).

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments		
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work	E-learning	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. <i>Introduction</i> . Linguistic diversity of the contemporary world. Bigger languages, smaller languages. Decrease of linguistic diversity, endangered languages, dead languages.	2							2		
2. <i>Core theoretical issues in linguistics</i> . Topics are listed below. Seminars should consolidate comprehension and skills. 2.1. Historical linguistics and language relationship: how do languages change over time? (2 hours). 2.2. Is language an instinct? Is grammar universal? (1 hour). 2.3. Grammar: How are languages organized? (2 hours). 2.4. Language contact: how do languages influence one another? (1 hour). 2.5. Language acquisition: how do children learn their mother tongue? (1 hour). 2.6. Sapir – Whorf hypothesis: does language shape our view of the world? (1). 2.7. Sociolinguistics: language and society, norm, bilingualism. How does language function in society? Is there such a thing as “correct” language? Can one have more than one native language? (2 hours).	1 0		4					1 4	1 5	Reading book chapters and papers, preparation for discussion, writing essays (topics will be announced during the course). Reading should be completed until the end of the course. Compulsory literature: chapters in N. Evans (2010: Parts 1-2; Chapter 5), Deutscher (2007: Chapter 6), Genetti (2014: Chapters 11-14), Pinker (1994: Chapter 4). All relevant readings will be uploaded onto the VLE system.
3. <i>Parameters of cross-linguistic variation</i> . Topics are listed below. Seminars should consolidate comprehension and skills. 3.1. Linguistic typology. Empirical Universals: how can one make sense of the diversity of linguistic structures? (2 hours). 3.2. The typology of sound systems (2 hours).	9		2					1 1	1 5	Reading book chapters and papers. Preparation for discussion / seminars about solving linguistic problems (discovering patterns in primary linguistic data). Reading should be completed before the end of the course.

3.3. The typology of grammatical categories (3 hours). 3.4. Morphology and syntax: Do all languages have words? what are "words" in different languages? (2 hours).										Compulsory literature: Genetti (2014: Chapters 2-6), various chapters from Velupillai (2012: Chapters 1-3). Optional readings: Song (2018). All relevant readings will be uploaded onto the VLE system.	
4. <i>Midterm test</i> . Will take place in the second part of a lecture.	1								1	8	<i>Preparation for the midterm test.</i>
5. <i>Linguistic portraits of macro- and micro-regions</i> . This thematic block will be equally distributed throughout the course. Topics are listed below. Seminars should consolidate comprehension and skills. 5.1. Africa (2 hours). the Americas 5.2. Australia & Oceania (2 hours) 5.3. Asia (2 hours). Europe: "Standard Average European", Circum-Baltic languages, The Balkan Sprachbund (3 hours).	9		1 0						1 9	3 0	Reading fragments of grammars, papers, solving linguistic problems. Essays focusing on the analysis of primary linguistic data. Concrete languages analyzed will be selected according to students' preferences. Compulsory reading: 3 Chapters from Part II of Genetti (2014) according to a student's choice. Optional reading: Nichols (1992), Haspelmath (2001), Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli (2001) All relevant readings and primary data will be uploaded onto the VLE system.
6. <i>Summary of the course</i> .	1								1		
7. <i>Final test (exam)</i> .										1 4	<i>Preparation for the final test (exam)</i>
Total	3		1						4	8	
	2		6						8	2	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Mini-essays	20	During the semester, starting from week 2.	During the semester, students will be asked to write 2 compulsory brief essays (reflections on and analysis of primary linguistic data), up to 5000 characters without spaces (~ one page and a half) each. Criteria for assessment: coherence of argumentation, clarity. Max. 2 points. Each essay is assigned up to 2 points, the average score between the essays is the student's result. One missing essay results in the subtraction of one point. - Coherence of argumentation 1 – 0,5 – 0 points 1 – <i>Argumentation is logical, conclusions are well-grounded.</i> 0,5 – <i>There is some logic in the student's argumentation, but important links are missing.</i> 0 – <i>The essay is incoherent, conclusions are missing or are poorly grounded.</i> - Clarity 1 – 0,5 – 0 points 1: <i>The idea is presented completely clearly. Correct terminology (discussed in the class before) is used.</i> 0.5. <i>The text is more or less clear, although it contains commonplaces or uses terms poorly.</i> 0. <i>The text is completely lacking in clarity, terminology is used inappropriately.</i> <i>If the final score for the essays is not a whole number, it is rounded off upwards.</i>

Midterm written test	30	8 th week	In the midterm, students will write a brief test (in 1 academic hour). Questions in the test are both closed (several answer options) and open. Answers to open questions are supposed to be brief (1-2 words). Criteria for assessment: correctness of answers. The correctness/incorrectness is uncontroversial. The test consists of 9 questions, 3 correct answers count as one point. In the borderline case when the grade falls 1 point short of a whole score, it is rounded off upwards. Max. 3 points. The test evaluates students' knowledge of basic facts about linguistic diversity (discussed during lectures and seminars), their ability to analyze primary linguistic data, and critically evaluate public discourse related to language (e.g. statements about languages and linguistics occurring in media).
Final written test (exam)	50	During exam session	During the exam session, students will write a final test. The test evaluates students' knowledge of basic facts about linguistic diversity (discussed during lectures and seminars), their ability to analyze primary linguistic data, and critically evaluate public discourse related to language (e.g. statements about languages and linguistics occurring in media). Criteria for assessment: correctness of answers. The test consists of 15 questions, 3 correct answers count as one point. In the borderline case when the grade falls 1 point short of a whole score, it is rounded off upwards. Max. 5 points. The duration of the test is 2 academic hours.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
Evans, Nicholas	2010	Dying words: Endangered languages and what they have to tell us. (Selected Chapters)		West Sussex: Willey Balckwell
Genetti, Carol (ed.)	2014	How languages work: An introduction to language and linguistics. (Selected Chapters)		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Pinker, Steven	1994	The Language Instinct. (Selected Chapters)		New York: William Morrow and Company
Velupillai, Viveka	2012	An Introduction to Linguistic Typology (Selected Chapters).		Amsterdam: John Benjamins
Optional reading				
Evans, Vyvyan	2004	The Language Myth: Why Language is not an Instinct.		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Deutscher, Guy.	2011	Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages.		New York: Metropolitan Books
Gil, David	2001	Escaping Eurocentrism: Fieldwork as a Process of Unlearning.	P. Newman, M Ratliff (eds.). <i>Linguistic</i>	Cambridge: Cambridge

			<i>Fieldwork</i> : 102-132.	University Press
Haspelmath, Martin	2011	The European linguistic area: Standard Average European.	M. Haspelmath, E. König, W. Oesterreicher & W. Raible (eds.), <i>Language Typology and Language Universals: An International Handbook</i> : 1492–1510.	Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter.
Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Maria & Bernhard Wälchli	2001	The Circum-Baltic languages: An areal typological approach.	Östen Dahl & Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm (eds.), <i>Circum-Baltic Languages. Volume 2: Grammar and Typology</i> : 615–750.	Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Nichols, Johanna	1992	Linguistic Diversity in Space and Time.		Chicago: University of Chicago Press
Song, Jae Jung	2018	Linguistic Typology.		Oxford: Oxford University Press