

Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences



PSP1125 Language sciences

[30h] 3 credits

This course is taught in the 1st semester

Teacher(s): Michel Hupet
Language: French
Level: First cycle

Aims

- to supply the means for a thinking about the nature, the structures and the functions of language and to prepare the students to later courses appealing, directly or indirectly, to the basic notions of general Linguistics. In order to develop this thinking, the students should have at their disposal some essential concepts to understand the language internal (basic units and structures) and external (relationships with other fields) functioning.

The grounds of this thinking will be insured by a reminder of the main development steps of the language conceptions and by a lecture on the recent theories on language, viewed as a linguistic code and a representation tool, but also as a communication tool instituting links between talkers and contexts of use.

At the end of the course, the students must understand what is common and what is specific to different language sciences and more particularly to those concerning psychology, namely general and developmental psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and sociolinguistics.

Main themes

Part 1 : short historical survey of the successive definitions given by man to the language (from 5th BC up to now) in order to show the durability of some basic debates, and to show also how the language saussurian conception is born as a sign system founding modern linguistics.

Part 2 : "functioning" of natural language. Examination of the operating units (morphemes, phonemes, etc.) and structures (analysis in immediate constituents, distributionalism, etc.). The recent formal approaches and the modelling they propose for the recurrent phonological, syntactic and semantic structures; at this point the notion of "grammar" will be developed as a model of linguistic competence. Analysis of the limits of a purely formal approach of language and the way the "pragmatic" allows to overrun these limits (presuppositional phenomena, acts of language, conversational ability).

Part 3 : the proper issues for some specific language sciences: namely general and developmental psycholinguistics [what is known about the cognitive processes underlying language learning and use?], neurolinguistics [what is known about the brain structures implied in language learning, functioning and pathologies?] and sociolinguistics [what is known about the social factors determining the features and use of a language?]

Content and teaching methods

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Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings,

...)

An equivalent course is given in other programs

Other credits in programs

FILO11BA	Première année de bachelier en philosophie	(3 credits)	Mandatory
INFO23	Troisième année du programme conduisant au grade d'ingénieur civil informaticien	(3 credits)	
PSP11BA	Première année de bachelier en sciences psychologiques et de l'éducation	(3 credits)	Mandatory