Morphology and Syntax

Modules Ling2, Ling2_KW, FD2_GS, C, C/E, III

The lecture 'Introduction to linguistics' gave an overview of the different levels of human language. This seminar extends the Introduction within two core fields: Morphology and Syntax. We will discuss and analyse the patterns of English word formation and inflection as well as the structure of more complex syntactic units from phrases to clauses and sentences. We will take a descriptive approach to English morphosyntax, not arguing which grammatical structures are correct, but which grammatical structures exist, and why.

Course book: Bernd Kortmann (2020)[2] *English Linguistics: Essentials*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler. (free online access via our University Library)

Preparatory warm-up:
Revise your 'Introduction to Linguistics' materials on morphology and syntax.
Take a first look at the Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English at http://ewave-atlas.org/.
Watch "Born to use language" and "Building baby trees", both by The Ling Space (https://www.youtu be.com/watch?v=MLNFGWJOXjA, and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmghbKNiI1k)

Also note our linguistics lectures this term.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:
- describe and explain the main morphological and syntactic mechanisms of human language, including English;
- list properties of language that are universal among human beings, as well as examples for linguistic variation;
- interpret and critically discuss academic research, both empirical and theoretical;
- use linguistic atlases and examine empirical language data;
- design their own research project, empirical or theoretical, and carry out their own analysis, implementing theoretical and methodological aspects discussed in the course; this will ideally lead to their first academic paper.

Major goals:
- enhance linguistic awareness and develop a sense for the role of grammar in human language, which includes the interconnectedness between universal principles and;
- repetition, entrenchment, expansion and application of morphological and syntactic terminology and concepts; based on the knowledge acquired in the "Introduction to Linguistics", more insights will now be gained into what human grammar is.

Assessment
Regular attendance and active participation: readings, discussions, team work; max. 3 absences if a term paper needs to be written for this particular course, or if a certificate of attendance is needed.
To track your activities, use the activity tracking and completion tracking functions in Moodle.

Term Papers and Oral Exams (Modulprüfungen; more details in Moodle)
It is important that you like your term paper topic; choose wisely. All papers should include an empirical analysis of a morphological, syntactic or morphosyntactic feature. The focus of your term paper can be:
- a description and analysis of a linguistic feature, based on a collection of data (your own or some corpus), pursuing a central research question
- a description and analysis of a particular variety of English, with focus on morphological and syntactic aspects
- a theoretical paper on morphological/syntactic/variationist methodology (but: theoretical papers tend to be even more demanding than empirical ones)

For oral exams, it is important to be able to explain the terms and concepts discussed in class. One tool that you can use to prepare is our Glossary. Fill in the definitions/descriptions on a weekly basis. This way, you will have a complete glossary at the end of the lecture period. Note that the glossary might contain additional terms not discussed in class; at the same time, not all terms might be listed.

Syllabus (subject to alterations)

The course will alternate between synchronic meetings on ZOOM and asynchronous weeks where materials and tasks will be available in Moodle.

Week	Date	Topic	Prepare for the session
W1	April 14	**Meet and greet (meeting)** Formalities, experiences and expectations Morphology and Syntax: Definitions and warm-up	**Revise "Introduction to Linguistics", sessions on Morphology and Syntax**
W2	April 21	**Intro: The language system (meeting)**	**Moodle tasks, video**
W3	April 28	**Morphology: Types of morphemes, allomorphs, morphophonemics (asynchronous)** human cognition, language acquisition approaches: nativism/UG, lists + rules	**Read Kortmann (2005: 51-54 + 55-59)** **Moodle videos** Plag et al. (2015: 71-79, 83-89); O'Grady et al. (2001: 164-169)
W4	May 05	**Morphology: Word formation (meeting)** linguistic creativity and productivity	**Background: Kortmann (2005: 60-73)** Plag et al. (2015: 98-109); McGregor (2015: 85-89)
W5	May 12	**Morphology: Inflectional morphology (meeting)** language typology, interface with dialectology Exercise: WALS and eWAVE atlases	**Background: Kortmann (2005: 79-86)**
W6	May 19	**Morphosyntax: Variation and change (asynchronous)** varieties of English, historical development of English morphology and syntax	**Moodle video and exercise**
W7	May 26	**Syntax: Parts of Speech, Phrases, Clauses (meeting)** The Ling Space "Principles and parameters" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbK0ls7YVN4	**Read Kortmann (2005: 86-91)** Plag et al. (2015: 123-130)
W8	June 02	**Syntax & Semantics:** **Syntactic functions, Semantic roles (meeting)**	**Read Kortmann (2005: 91-95)** Plag et al. (2015: 131-142)
W9	June 09	**Syntax: The English VP I (meeting)** verb types, valency nonstandard V patterns, including doublings	**Read Kortmann (2005: 96-101)** Plag et al. (2015: 131-142)
W10	June 16	**Syntax: The English VP II (asynchronous)** TENSE, ASPECT, MOOD, VOICE	**Read Kortmann (2005: 101-108)**
W11	June 23	**Syntax: Introduction to X∀-Theory (meeting)**	**Read O'Grady et al. (2017: 172-183, 207-210)** **Moodle: videos by The Ling Space**
W12	June 30	**Syntax: Building trees (meeting)**	**Read Lewis Carroll 'Jabberwocky'**
W13	July 07	**EXAMS SESSION (meeting)** **for term paper and oral exam candidates**	Term paper candidates: bring in topics that you would like to write about; Oral exam candidates: revise all materials, bring in remaining questions
W14	July 14	**Wrap-up (meeting)**	**Revise course materials** **Moodle Etherpad** remaining questions + feedback on seminar
W15	July 21	*oral examination period*	

*selected readings available in Moodle