COURSE DETAIL

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Country
Italy

Host Institution
University of Bologna

Program(s)
University of Bologna

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
Linguistics Italian

UCEAP Course Number
154

UCEAP Course Suffix

UCEAP Official Title
LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

UCEAP Transcript Title
LING DIVERSITY

UCEAP Quarter Units
6.00

UCEAP Semester Units
4.00

Course Description

This course is part of the Laurea Magistrale degree program and is intended for advanced level students. Enrollment is by permission of the instructor. The aim of the course is to illustrate the diversity of the world's languages and the implications of this diversity for a general theory of language and its use, discussing the main methods and results of the typological-functionalist approach and of the approaches developed in the pragmatic field. Through the comparison of different languages, belonging to the various families attested in the world, the theoretical and methodological bases for the analysis of structural, semantic and pragmatic diversity of human languages are discussed in detail, also in relation to cultural diversity. At the end of the course, students are able to trace different languages back to different 'linguistic types' and have an up-to-date knowledge of threatened and endangered languages; have a thorough knowledge of the notions of linguistic and pragmatic universals; be able to set up and carry out autonomously an interlinguistic comparison with respect to single linguistic and pragmatic phenomena; be familiar with the main techniques of data collection and linguistic documentation; and be able to orient themselves within the descriptive grammars of different languages.

The course is organized in five parts. For each topic, different perspectives and theoretical proposals are compared, in the light of the most recent scientific debate:

1. Introduction to linguistic diversity
2. The world's languages and their health status.
3. Analyzing linguistic diversity: data collection and methods of analysis
4. Linguistic typology: seeking order in chaos
5. Explorations of linguistic diversity

The topics addressed in the second part of the course are listed below. The list may be subject to change depending on the specific interests of the attending students.

- Different languages construct words differently: morphological types
- Subject and object in world’s languages: syntactic types
- The categorization of time and reality: languages without time markers, time and reality of nouns and adjectives
- Noun categories: genders (how many?) and number (beyond singular and plural...)
- Parts of speech: how are people, things, and events categorized? Are there languages without adjectives?
- The expression of gratitude in the world's languages: is saying 'thank you' a universal phenomenon or does it depend on education and culture?
- How to communicate misunderstanding? The expression of error and its repair in world languages
- Languages without AND and languages without OR: connectives beyond logical distinctions

A basic knowledge of general linguistics is required. Those who have never taken a basic linguistics exam will have to recover independently, by studying a basic manual (Berruto & Cerruti 2011 is suggested).

Language(s) of Instruction
Italian

Host Institution Course Number
99927

Host Institution Course Title
DIVERSITÀ LINGUISTICA (LM)

Host Institution Course Details
https://www.unibo.it/en/study/phd-professional-masters-specialisation-schools-a…

Host Institution Campus
BOLOGNA

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree
LM in ITALIAN CULTURE AND LANGUAGE FOR FOREIGNERS

Host Institution Department
Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures - LILEC

Course Last Reviewed
2024-2025

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