

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
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Seminar: Language variation (2AN2081)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier principal M A - sciences du langage et de la communication	Séminaire: 2 ph	cont. continu	5
Pilier secondaire M A - sciences du langage et de la communication	Séminaire: 2 ph	cont. continu	5

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

Equipe enseignante:

Martin Hilpert

Objectifs:

This MA seminar will introduce the concept of language variation - the fact that language is flexible and often offers speakers more than one way of expressing themselves. We will look at concrete examples of variation in English, and we will try to figure out how language variation can be explained.

Contenu:

Languages often allows speakers to say the same thing in different ways:

- John gave Mary the book vs. John gave the book to Mary
- my brother's dog vs. the dog of my brother
- prouder vs. more proud
- mother and father vs. father and mother

The main question that we will ask in this class is why speakers sometimes choose one thing and sometimes the other. Do they pick one at random? Or is there an explanation? In fact, linguists have discovered that there is no single explanation, but rather a whole set of factors that typically play a role. For example, in coordinated noun phrases like family and friends, salt and pepper, or day and night, the more important element tends to come first. Looking at several examples of linguistic variation, you will discover how they have been studied, and what the results tell us about knowledge of language in general.

Forme de l'évaluation:

- Regular reading assignments and homework quizzes (20%)
- Presentation of a research article with a group (20%)
- A final research project, written up as a paper (approx. 4000 words) (60%)

In order to pass the course as a whole, all three components need to be passable. Failure in either of the three components will incur a rattrapage of a longer term paper (approx. 6000 words, 100%).

Documentation:

Readings for this class will be distributed electronically.

Pré-requis:

This class is for MA students.

Forme de l'enseignement:

active project work, discussion