

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- www.unine.ch/lettres

Seminar: Controversies in linguistics (2AN2082)

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

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

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Automne

Equipe enseignante:

Martin Hilpert

Objectifs:

This MA seminar will focus on several "big questions" in linguistics that have been hotly debated. We will address issues such as the question whether babies are born with linguistic knowledge or whether your language influences the way you think. The seminar will make students familiar with important debates in linguistics, and it will help students become more skilled in the analysis of linguistic argumentation.

Contenu:

- Controversy 1: Are babies born with linguistic knowledge or do they start with a blank slate?
- Controversy 2: Does the language you speak influence how you think about the world, or can you express any thought in any language?
- Controversy 3: Do languages in different climates sound differently, or is there no link between geography and phonology?
- Controversy 4: Can lexical words over time turn into grammatical words but not the other way around?
- Controversy 5: Is there a language in the Himalaya that is spoken by the descendants of people who came from islands in the Pacific?
- Controversy 6: Is linguistic knowledge influenced by language use or are grammar and usage different things?

Forme de l'évaluation:

Regular reading assignments and homework quizzes (30%)
 Presentation of a research article with a group (30%)
 A final research project, written up as a paper (approx. 4000 words) (40%)

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