Evolutionary Linguistics (A000491)

Valid as from the academic year 2019-2020

Course Specifications

Lecturers in academic year 2019-2020
De Caluwe, Johan

LW06 lecturer-in-charge

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2019-2020
A (semester 1) Dutch seminar: coached exercises 45.0 h

Offered in the following programmes in 2019-2020

Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - English)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - French)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - German)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - Greek)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - Italian)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - Latin)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - Spanish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - Swedish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - German)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Greek)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Italian)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Latin)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Spanish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Swedish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - English)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - German)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - Greek)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - Italian)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - Latin)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - Spanish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - Swedish)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject German - Greek)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject German - Italian)

Contact hrs Study time 150 h
Credits 5.0
Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)
Contact hrs 45.0 h

(Approved)
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject German - Spanish) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject German - Swedish) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Latin - Greek) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Latin - Italian) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Latin - Spanish) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Latin - Swedish) 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology 5 A
Bachelor of Arts in East European Languages and Cultures 5 A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature 5 A

Teaching languages
Dutch

Keywords
Linguistics, evolutionary linguistics, language development - philogenetically

Position of the course
This course gives students knowledge of the problems, the methodology and the types of argumentation in evolutionary linguistics

Contents
Evolutionary linguistics was very popular around the middle of the 19th century, but ultimately proved to be too speculative. In the early nineties of the 20th century the theme was firmly set on the linguistic agenda again. Evolutionary linguistics takes advantage from all the relevant findings in anthropology, archeology, cognitive psychology, computational linguistics, neurolinguistics, etc. to set up hypotheses on the earliest stages in the development of language.

Typical issues are:
- Is human language homologous or analogous to any other communication system of related species?
- Is the complexity of human language the product of the 'classical' Darwinian processes of adaptation through natural selection, or is it a mere by-product of man's computational competences?
- Can we formulate any hypotheses on the possible/necessary features of a proto-language, and on the principles leading from this proto-language to the present variety and complexity of languages?

Initial competences
Having knowledge of the basic concepts and paradigms in linguistics, corresponding to the final competences of 'Introduction to (text) linguistics' (Ba1) and 'General Linguistics' (Ba2)

Final competences
1. Having knowledge of the argumentation in the debate on the analogous/homologous character of human language.
2. Having knowledge of the argumentation in the debate on the adaptive origin of language complexity.
3. Having knowledge of the contribution of anthropology, archeology, cognitive psychology, and other 'auxiliary' sciences to the argumentation in evolutionary linguistics.
4. Being able to reflect on possible and necessary conditions on contents and structure of any proto-language.

Conditions for credit contract
Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract
This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods
Seminar: coached exercises

(Approved)
Extra information on the teaching methods
   lectures, critical analyses of articles on the subject

Learning materials and price
   Reader with a selection of articles on the subject.

References

Course content-related study coaching
   in group, or individually, depending on subject and number of students

Evaluation methods
   end-of-term evaluation

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period
   Open book examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period
   Open book examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation
   not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods
   Assessment moment
      periodic (100%)

   Assessment form
      written exam (open book)

Calculation of the examination mark

Facilities for Working Students
   Facilities:
      1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance
      2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
      3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during office hours

Extra information:
   For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy

(Approved)