

COURSES BY PÉTER SZÚCS



Courses in spring 2025

- **Challenging Grammar**

This course complements other courses about linguistics. The main goal is to present such linguistic phenomena to the students which are challenging either from the point of view of syntactic analysis or the meaning/interpretational side. Thus, the course will make students think about language, it will provide a deeper understanding of English grammar, and it will also familiarize students with some of the indispensable concepts and approaches of linguistic research.

- **Targeting the Verb Phrase**

This course aims to develop the students' knowledge of English grammar, focusing on the verb phrase and related topics. While the perspective of the course is primarily descriptive, some linguistic insights will also be provided. The course will enable students to be more confident in the use and understanding of verb-related constructions and grammar overall.

- **Advanced topics in language studies – Language and culture**

This course is about aspects of language which interact with culture, in the broadest sense. Using a range of perspectives, the primary goal is to advance students' conceptual thinking, understanding of language, linguistics and proper argumentation. As a result, they should also be able to form an informed opinion of a number of public issues pertaining to language.

Other courses

- **Introduction to linguistics**

The aim of this course is to familiarize students with the nature and the scope of linguistic inquiries. We will focus on the following four core areas of linguistic investigation: morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. By completing the course, students will be able to understand and analyze some of the basic factors that govern language.

- **Syntax and morphology**

This course gives a broad overview of a number of topics in syntax and morphology. Using a range of data, the primary goal is to enable students to take a scientific perspective on language, understand the logic of proper argumentation and to grasp some of the basic concepts in contemporary linguistics. Each topic is supplied with some recommended reading material, but the focus is going to be on classroom discussion, based on distributed handouts.

- **Advanced topics in syntax**

Building on previous syntax courses, we set out to discover some of the data, concepts and approaches of modern syntactic research. We will survey the following areas: the syntax of infinitival constructions, the properties and analysis of constructions related to information structure, the nanosyntactic approach to morphosyntax, the internal structure of pronouns, ellipsis, and a brief overview of LFG, a non-Chomskyan generative framework. Completing this course will not only enable the students to have a grasp on advanced syntactic topics but it will also familiarize them with the process of linguistic argumentation.

- **Vocabulary building**

The fundamental aim of the course is to consolidate and expand the students' vocabulary of English. A secondary goal is to introduce students to some fundamental concepts and issues in the linguistic theory related to the mental lexicon. Thus we are going to discover fields such as word-formation, lexical relations, figurative language, varieties of English and sociolinguistic variables. The contextualized presentation of the vocabulary items and the variety of practice methods will ensure the efficiency of learning.

- **Issues in biolinguistics, neurolinguistics and psycholinguistics**

This course gives a broad overview of a number of topics pertaining to the philosophy of language, psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics. Using a range of data and a variety of theoretical approaches, the goal is to enable students to take a scientific perspective on how language relates to general cognitive processes, to engage in meaningful discussion about the language-mind-brain interface and also to understand the logic of proper scientific, rational argumentation underlying the relevant fields.

- **Targeting the noun phrase**

This course aims to lead you further into how the rules of grammar work in English. It focuses on the noun phrase and related topics from a descriptive perspective. The following topics are to be covered during the semester: countable-uncountable nouns, articles, determiners, quantifiers, agreement, pronouns, relative clauses, adjectives, and adverbs.

- **Hungarian from a linguistic perspective**

This course will introduce students into the study of the Hungarian language. We will focus on issues that have a broader linguistic relevance and that play a central role in the grammar of Hungarian. The course is designed in a manner that makes every class self-contained: we work with toy grammars of Hungarian, we use examples with a limited set of Hungarian words that we learn together in the classroom, and we try to describe the system and build elementary rules together. Wherever relevant, we compare Hungarian to other languages, and we discuss what aspects of the language are easy for an average language learner and what aspects require more demanding.

By the end of this course, students will have an understanding of the fundamentals of Hungarian grammar, and they will also have learnt some Hungarian.

- **Trends in linguistic studies**

Building on previous syntax courses, we set out to discover some of the core concepts of modern syntactic theory, supplemented by recent research trends. We will survey the following areas: syntactic relations and pronoun behavior, verb phrase structure, wh-phenomena, the syntax of the left periphery and the syntax-morphology interface. Completing this course will not only enable the students to have a grasp on contemporary syntactic

research but it will also familiarize them with the process of linguistic argumentation.

- **Grammar in Context**

This course is designed to help students deepen their familiarity with various grammatical structures in English. The course will be different from traditional grammar classes in several ways. One, we will assume a deeper/wider perspective on linguistic structures, and see how underlying principles and the discourse contexts affects the use and acceptability of these. Two, language will be observed in a natural context, with the aim of authentic materials (TV shows, series, YouTube videos). Finally, although grammar is our main focus, the coverage of the course will extend to vocabulary building as well. Thus, the course is integrative in its approach, improving a variety of linguistic skills. This, besides being an intellectually stimulating and fun experience, will hopefully also result in a much better and deeper understanding of language in use.