

Veranstalter:	Prof. Dr. Peter Siemund
Thema:	Introduction to Linguistics
Art der Veranstaltung:	Seminar 1a
Veranstaltungsnummer:	53-506
Zeit:	Do. 16-18 (+2st. Übung)
Raum:	Ü35-01047
Beginn:	20.10.2022

Linguistics concerns itself with the study of language and hence deals with something everybody knows, uses with surprising efficiency, but is usually not able to talk about. Language can be conceived of as a knowledge system that we unconsciously make use of for communication. The ability of humans to speak and understand language without even being aware of what they are doing has been puzzling researchers for generations. There are theories galore that aim to explain this remarkable ability, but it is doubtful that there will ever be a simple explanation.

In this course, we will systematically set about making explicit the knowledge that we all possess but find so difficult to talk about. Areas to be covered include the production of speech sounds, the structure of words and sentences as well as how words and sentences come to mean what they mean. Although the focus will be on English and German, we will try to bring other languages into the discussion whenever appropriate. We will also take a look at the strategies human beings pursue and exploit when they communicate with one another and thus embed language and communication in a wider cultural context. Since for the majority of students, linguistics is a completely new subject, the course will start with an overview of the English language and a general introduction to the field.

The course is designed as an introductory seminar. There will be lecture like sequences, short presentations on the part of the participants and in-class exercises. Great emphasis will be placed on teamwork and the ability to cooperate. Students should be prepared to shoulder a certain amount of reading from week to week.

I will distribute course material throughout the semester on which you will find most of the information necessary for following the course successfully. Books to accompany the course will be recommended in the first session.