Faculties of Humanities and Theology

SPVM03, Language and Linguistics: Information Structure, 7.5 credits

Språk och språkvetenskap: Informationsstruktur, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the programmes director by delegation from the pro-dean for first- and second-cycle studies on 2013-08-22 to be valid from 2013-08-22, autumn semester 2013.

General Information

The course is an elective component of the Master s programme in Language and Linguistics. The course is also offered as a freestanding course and can normally be included in a first or second cycle degree.

Language of instruction: English
The course can be taught in Swedish if an agreement is reached by both the lecturer and the students. Such an agreement would depend on both the lecturer and the students having a good knowledge of Swedish.

Main field of studies	Depth of study relative to the degree requirements
-	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course the student shall

Knowledge and understanding
- be able to give an account of the research area of information structure from both grammatical and functional perspectives
- be able to give an account of the pragmatics of information structure, in particular on the basis of the research findings of the Prague School and the insights of Anglo-Saxon functionalism

- be able to understand and give an account of the ways in which information structure is codified in syntax and phonology, in particular on the basis of research into generative grammar
- be able to give an account of relevant semantic aspects connected to information structure, in particular in connection to the analysis of negation, polarity, focus particles and topicality

Competence and skills

- be able to analyse and discuss the connection between the information structure of texts and sentences and its linguistic realisation
- be able to identify relevant information structure markers in speech and writing
- be able to carry out a minor scholarly investigation by applying the set of concepts that the various dimensions of information structure demand

Judgement and approach

- be able to discuss and evaluate various linguistic variants from a perspective of information structure.

Course content

The course aims to provide students with knowledge of concepts and theories within the research area of information structure. Students receive an introduction to relevant existing research within the areas of phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Basic concepts such as topic–comment, theme–rheme, background and focus as well as key constructions marking topic and focus in various languages are examined. In addition, universal regularities and principles as well as typological variation are studied. Various methods applied in research into information structure are discussed throughout the course.

Course design

Teaching consists of taught lectures and seminars, and scheduled sessions without a lecturer. Attendance is compulsory at the 3-5 seminars.

Assessment

The assessment is based on an oral presentation of approximately 30 minutes which is based on a written assignment of a maximum of ten pages plus a bibliography. Both the oral presentation and the written report are assessed.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction.

Entry requirements

For admission to the course, students must have 90 credits in Linguistics or a language subject (or the equivalent) and English B from Swedish upper secondary school or the equivalent.

Further information

1. The course is offered at the Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University.
2. The course content partly overlaps with that of TYSM13 German: Information Structure so the two courses cannot be included in the same degree.

Subcourses in SPVM03, Language and Linguistics: Information Structure

Applies from H13

1301   Language and Linguistics: Information Structure, 7,5 hp
         Grading scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction