

## **LINN25, Linguistics: The Origins of Language, 7.5 credits**

*Lingvistik: Språkets uppkomst, 7,5 högskolepoäng*

**Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå**

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus was approved by The pro-dean for First-Cycle Studies at the Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2017-09-29 and was last revised on 2025-05-26 by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology (U 2025/351). The revised syllabus comes into effect 2025-09-01 and is valid from the spring semester 2026.

### **General information**

The course is included in the Master of Arts (120 credits) programme in Language and Linguistics (HASPV). It 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 is normally taught in English. It can be taught in Swedish if an agreement is reached by both the teacher and the students. Such an agreement requires that all lecturers and all students are proficient in Swedish.

*Main field of study      Specialisation*

Language and  
Linguistics

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry  
requirements

### **Learning outcomes**

On completion of the course, the student shall be able to

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

- give an account of current research on the origins of language,
- give an account of different types of animal communication and describe differences and similarities between these and human language,

- describe certain anatomical and neural conditions for language from the perspective of evolution,
- describe differences and similarities between biological and cultural evolution and their possible interaction,
- explain in a specialised manner aspects of the complex relation between language and consciousness,

### **Competence and skills**

- compare different hypotheses about the origins of language based on empirical evidence,

### **Judgement and approach**

- critically assess different hypotheses about the origins of language.

### **Course content**

The course covers current interdisciplinary research on the origins of language. The focus is on themes related to the relationship between biological and cultural evolution, and anatomical and neural prerequisites for language from an evolutionary perspective. The course also includes elements concerning animal communication, experiments on language learning in monkeys and other animals, the relationship between language and consciousness and various hypotheses on the origin of language and their evaluation in the light of existing evidence.

### **Course design**

Teaching is in the form of 10 compulsory lectures and one compulsory group assignment. Absence from compulsory lectures can be compensated for with written assignments.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is based on (a) written comments on the course platform, (b) an oral presentation of the group assignment and (c) an essay that in a specialised manner deals with one of the course themes.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

### **Grades**

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction  
For the grade of Pass, students must have been awarded the grade of Pass on all three components. For the grade Pass with Distinction, a grade of Pass with Distinction is additionally required on the essay and on at least one other graded component.

## Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must have 90 credits, of which at least 60 must be from studies of a language or linguistics (general linguistics or phonetics) and English 6/English B from upper secondary school or the equivalent.

## Further information

- The course is offered at the Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University.
- It replaces ALSM04.
- The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree.