UCLouvain

lfilo1130

2026

Language philosophy

5.00 credits	30.0 h	Q2

Teacher(s)	Verdée Peter ;
Language :	French > English-friendly
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Main themes	This course offers an introduction to the philosophy of language and aims to provide an overview of the different aspects of language: · its nature: difference between human, animal and artificial language, the innate or acquired status of linguistic ability, the question of the origin of language · its relationship with reality: representation, expression, fiction, reference, truth · its relationship with thought · its relationship with action: speech acts The fundamental concepts of the philosophy of language (i.e. reference, sense, meaning, truth, intentionality, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, ordinary/formal language, grammar) are introduced, explained and placed in their historical context.
Learning outcomes	**At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :** · Understanding of the different movements, concepts and issues of the philosophy of language from a historical perspective. · Understanding of how the study of language falls into three groups: syntax, semantics and pragmatics. · Ability to align the questions posed by contemporary philosophy of language with the key topics of the history of philosophy.
Evaluation methods	**June:** · **20% of the final grade:** Group presentation of a text in class. · **80% of the final grade:** An oral examination with a written preparation to be submitted on Moodle (the questions are made available the day before the oral exam). **September:** · **20% of the final grade:** Group presentation of a text in class (retaining the June grade) **or** a written assignment (a 2-page reflection on a central question). · **80% of the final grade:** An oral examination with a written preparation to be submitted on Moodle (the questions are made available the day before the oral exam).
Teaching methods	A few ex cathedra courses Reading courses. Students prepare texts at home and present the structure of the text in group in class.
Content	The course begins with a historical introduction to the philosophy of language where major themes are introduced in their historical context. Then we will study the following texts: 1. Gottlob Frege, "Sense and reference" 2. W. V. O. Quine, "Le mythe de la signification " 3. Michael Dummett, "What do I know when I know a language?" 4. Peter Strawson, "Context and meaning" 5. David Kaplan, "Demonstratives. An essay on the semantics, logic, metaphysics and epistemology of demonstratives and other indexicals. " 6. John Searle, "What is a speech act? " 7. Casey Rebecca Johnson, "Mansplaining and Illocutionary Force" 8. Selection of passages from the book "Philosophy of Language (and Mind)" written by François Recanati
Bibliography	· Tous les textes et les slides seront disponibles sur Moodle
Faculty or entity in charge	EFIL

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Certificat universitaire en philosophie (fondements)	FILO9CE	5		
Bachelor in Modern Languages and Literatures: German, Dutch and English	GERM1BA	5		
Bachelor in Ancient and Modern Languages and Literatures	LAFR1BA	5		
Bachelor in Philosophy, Politics and Economics	PPE1BA	5		
Minor in Philosophy	MINFILO	5		
Bachelor in Philosophy	FILO1BA	5		
Minor in Linguistics (only available for reenrolment)	MINLING	5		
Bachelor in French and Romance Languages and Literatures : General	ROM1BA	5		
Bachelor in Modern Languages and Literatures : General	ROGE1BA	5		