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ORDENANZA: 430/2009

REGIMEN: CUATRIMESTRAL- SEGUNDO CUATRIMESTRE

ASIGNATURA: GRAMATICA INGLESA IV

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CARGA HORARIA: 4 HORAS SEMANALES

DEPARTAMENTO: LINGÜÍSTICA

ÁREA: LINGÜÍSTICA TEÓRICA

ORIENTACIÓN: GRAMÁTICA Y SINTAXIS INGLESA

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1. RATIONALE

Grammar was thought to be a system of rules that tells you how to speak and write correctly, according to certain norms or standards. However, the concept of grammar nowadays has acquired the status of science and its main objective is not only to describe but also explain the way any linguistic system works. Thus, the study of English Grammar from this perspective will provide teachers-to-be essential knowledge about the target language as both learners and future professionals.

This course will be carried out within the framework of Generative Grammar, i.e. the study of the human Faculty of Language developed by Chomsky (1957), specifically, the study of language concerned with “sentence construction” and the syntactic rules that group words together to form phrases and sentences. A grammar can be defined as the rules for the formation of syntactic structures and associated sounds and meanings, and a language is the set of all such triples defined by the grammar. The underlying thesis of this framework, Generative Grammar, is that sentences are generated by a subconscious set of procedures and that these procedures are part of our cognitive abilities. The goal of syntactic theory is to describe and explain these procedures. In generative grammar, the means for modelling these procedures is through the explication of the procedures that are thought to generate the sentences of a language, hence the name *generative* grammar.

Relevant implications for teaching and learning can be derived from the underlying premises of this approach. That is, the study of language as a natural object inevitably

implies the discovery and formulation of the formal mechanisms that operate in the language system through abstraction and deduction. Consequently, learning generative syntax implies observing data, arguing in favour of one analysis over another, using arguments drawn from language data (empirical arguments) and from the theory (theoretical arguments) to evaluate proposals, making predictions and generalizations and accepting or rejecting theoretical assumptions. Adopting this view on language analysis will guarantee students can both critically relate to the notions under study and creatively apply the central notions in the bibliography to their productions in the target language and their future tasks of teaching and planning lessons. Furthermore, this type of work will also increase learners' awareness of their own learning and will lead students to gain academic autonomy in this subject and in others in the curriculums. Thus, this subject intends to have students deepen their knowledge of previously seen concepts and learn new contents following the scientific method and exploit strategies that will allow them to self-regulate their learning. Also, it is a central aim to have them relate the knowledge learnt to their future teaching jobs. That is, in each unit, learners will be directed to reflect on the role this knowledge about the grammar of the language has not only in their development of the target language but also as a tool that grounds the planning of their lessons.

An explicit and conscious analysis of the grammatical properties of the target language will enable learners to develop deep and conscious knowledge of the target language they will then teach. With this aim in mind, learners will be guided to: (1) systematize and explain the relevant grammatical properties of the L2, (2) anticipate errors and possible areas of difficulties of their students, (3) develop solid theoretical knowledge that will guide them to plan lessons, design activities and device suitable actions taking into account those areas of difficulties, and (4) analyse the underlying causes of errors and guide learners to consciously correct them.

2. OBJECTIVES

To enable students

- To deepen their knowledge of Syntax both descriptively and theoretically;
- To hypothesise, work out solutions for syntactic problems and account for ungrammatical sentences of the language;
- To read theoretical analyses critically;
- To question or back up theoretical assumptions or proposals providing adequate empirical evidence;
- To use the knowledge learnt to self-monitor and correct their own mistakes;

- To identify the source of errors in their productions or their learners' productions to explain the processes behind those "errors";
- To use the explanations of L2 "errors" to design activities to aid L2 learning;
- To grasp a way of thinking and reasoning that will help them as students and would-be professionals;
- To become aware of their individual learning strategies to foster autonomous learning; and
- To integrate the knowledge gained in other subjects with the contents learnt in this course.

3. CONTENTS

Unit 1: The basics, linguistic variation and Second/Foreign Language acquisition.

Grammar and variation. Analysis of underlying assumptions on grammar in ESL activities. Modules/Sub theories of the grammar. X-bar Theory. Theta Theory. Arguments and predicates. The Theta Criterion and the Projection Principle. Apparent violations of the Theta Criterion: Lexical saturation of the theme with activity verbs, lexical saturation of the reflexive object, lexical saturation of the reciprocal object. Saturation by means of empty categories. Predicate types: transitive, unergative and unaccusative verbs: semantic and syntactic properties. Unaccusative vs unergative: semantic and syntactic diagnostic tests. Syntactic argumentation, data analysis and description, relevant generalizations. Interlanguage and Second language acquisition. Stages of L2 acquisition in verb types and *errors* SLLs' produce.

Reading materials

Carnie, A. (2021). Generative Grammar. In A. Carnie (Ed.), *Syntax. A Generative Introduction* (pp.1-35). Wiley.

D'Alessandro, R. 2019. *Syntax made easy. How to read (and draw) syntactic trees*. Utrecht University.

Larson, R. (2010). Constructing Arguments I. In R. Larson (Ed.), *Grammar as Science* (pp.179-186). The MIT Press.

Larson, R. (2010). Constructing Arguments II. In R. Larson (Ed.), *Grammar as Science* (pp.201-207). The MIT Press.

Martínez, A. & A. Monteserin. (2019). "Gramaticalidad, corrección y adecuación en el aula de lengua Observaciones desde la gramática generativa". *Quintú Quimün* N° 3, Q022, 2019, ISSN: 2591-541X.

Saville-Troike, M. (2006). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. In M. Saville-Troike. *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* (pp.1-5, 16-21). Cambridge University Press.

van Riemsdijk, H. & E. Williams. 1986. "Theta Theory" In *Introduction to the Theory of Grammar*. (pp.241-243; 248- 254). The MIT Press.

Further readings¹

Escutia, M. (2008). Transfer and Universal Grammar in unaccusative constructions errors. *Miscelánea: A journal of English and American studies*, 37(pp. 23-38). ISSN: 1137-6368.

Schäfer, F. (2009). The causative alternation. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 3(2), 641-681. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818x.2009.00127.x>

Unit 2: Case Theory

Case Assigners and assignees. Case Assignment under canonical government and spec-head agreement. Structural Case: types. Nominative, accusative, oblique. The concept of Abstract Case. The Case Filter. Burzio's generalization. Conditions for accusative case assignment. Exceptional Case Marking: in small clauses, in *believe*-type sentences, in for +DP+ to constructions, in resultatives assigned by unergative verbs. A-movement: the Extended Projection Principle and Case theory. Properties of A-movement: formation of A-chains. Movement in raising, passive and unaccusative constructions.

Reading materials

Carnie, A. (2021). DP Movement. In A. Carnie (Ed.), *Syntax. A Generative Introduction* (pp.331-360). Wiley Blackwell.

Koenenman, O. and Zeijlstra, H. (2017). Case Theory. In. O. Koenenman and H. Zeijlstra (Eds.) *Introducing Syntax* (pp.163-172). Cambridge University Press.

¹ Readings labelled *Further Reading* are the ones used in this course to illustrate SLA phenomena and SLLs' errors as presented in the research papers. Data and their results will be explained during lessons for students to work with these data and analyse them, group them considering their common syntactic properties, explain them and detect which pedagogical actions can aid SL development.

Further readings

Escutia, M. (2012). Expletives and Unaccusative Predicates in L2A. *Higher Education of Social Science*, (2) 3, pp. 1-14. DOI:10.3968/j.hess.1927024020120203.3022.

Unit 3: Empty Categories

Inventory of empty categories. PRO and control Theory. Features of PRO and NP traces: case and thematic properties that restrict their distribution. Predicate types: Raising vs. Subject control predicates. ECM vs. Object Control. Tests to prove their different thematic properties: *expletive* insertion, selectional restrictions and *that*-clause paraphrase.

Reading materials

Carnie, A. (2021). Raising, Control and Empty Categories. In: *Syntax. A Generative Introduction* (pp.429-460). Wiley Blackwell.

Koenenman, O. and Zeijlstra, H. (2017). Case Theory. In: O. Koenenman and H. Zeijlstra (Eds.) *Introducing Syntax* (pp.172-200). Cambridge University Press.

4. COURSE METHODOLOGY

English Grammar IV is the last grammar course students take and it is exclusively addressed to teachers-to-be. With this in mind, this syllabus offers the opportunity to describe different linguistic phenomena, analyse theoretical proposals and relate them to processes and stages SLLs might follow as they learn the target language . This will be done to reflect on the usefulness of this knowledge to accurately direct their actions when planning and designing activities. Consequently, learners will apply the knowledge learnt to explain new language data from other languages, L2 and foreign language learners' productions to detect of patterns and elaborate descriptions that will systematize a way of working in their future jobs.

To fulfil these aims, the teacher will be in charge of the presentation of the practical-theoretical lessons that will actively engage students to ask and answer questions, analyse sentences, provide new data or counterevidence to support or refute a claim to explain different syntactic phenomena and question theoretical presentations. All this will be possible because students will be previously directed to read and explore relevant connections between concepts in the theory by means of the weekly guides

specifically designed with this aim. In this way, learners can profit from the lesson and construct their knowledge of the topics under study critically and be actively engaged in activities that encourage argumentation, reflection and explanation of underlying patterns.

5. EVALUATION

In order to qualify as a **regular student**, students:

- should have obtained a passing mark of 4 or above in 60% of class assignments;
- should have passed the two written exams with a mark of 4 or above or their make-ups.

Regular students will sit for a **written final exam**. The format is the **same** they had for mid-term exam 1. This includes exercises on (1) statements; (2) Syntactic argumentation; and (3) sets of second language learners' errors and theoretical implications for teaching and learning based on the analysis of the phenomena under study.

In order to pass this subject for "**promoción**", students:

- should have obtained a mark of 7 or above in 70% of written assignments;
- should have passed the two written exams with a mark of 7 or above, without failing any of them (you should not have had to sit for any make-up exam).

The final mark will result from the average of both term exams and the practical assignments.

Extra mural students

The final exam for extra-mural students will consist of a **written final exam** with exercises on (1) statements; (2) syntactic argumentation; and (3) sets of SLLs' errors to explain the source of their ungrammaticality considering the topics in this subject, derive theoretical implications and propose a possible pedagogical action to tackle the problem in the classroom.

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