Methodological Principles in Linguistics

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1 Course description

The goal of this course is to introduce you to methods of linguistic research. Specifically, we will examine the following approaches:

1. Formal, grammatical principles
2. Universal principles
3. Pragmatic, communicative principles
4. Experimental evidence
5. Corpus study
6. Descriptive approaches

We will show how a linguistic problem can be attacked from any one of these directions, or a combination thereof. As a test case, we will look at accounts of the meaning of superlative quantifiers (at least and at most).

2 Course requirements

The grade will be divided as follows:

- (50%) Presentation of a linguistics paper of your choice (which I approve). The focus of the presentation should be a critical evaluation of the methodology of the paper.

- (25%) For each of the papers chosen by other students, read the paper before the presentation, and submit a brief (one paragraph) description of the problem the paper is trying to solve (no need to describe the solution).

- (25%) An exam.