Semantics of Case

On the Name of the course:

Lecturer name: Dr. Olga Kagan

Course number:

Office hours: Sunday 14:00-15:00

Short course description (5-10 lines) with key words at the end of the paragraph

In this course, we will discuss the ways in which Case-marking interacts with the semantics of a sentence. These phenomena reveal that the choice of Case can be sensitive to such factors as specificity, definiteness, existential presupposition, animacy, aspect, etc. We will discuss semantic as well as syntactic analyses of Case alternations and attempt to determine whether or not these analyses provide a satisfactory account of the interaction between form and meaning. The phenomena that we will consider include, but are not limited to, dative alternation, differential object marking, spatial case, predicate case, partitive case in Finnic and its relation to aspect, etc.

Key words: semantics, case, specificity, aspect, thematic roles

Course requirements:

Attendance required: yes
1. Presentation: 30%
2. Seminar paper: 60%
3. Quizzes: 10%

List of Topics (tentative):

Case and Meaning: Introduction
Case and Thematic Roles
Spatial Case
Differential Object Marking
Genitive Objects in Balto-Slavic
Case and Aspect
Predicate Case

Selected Bibliography:


