Abrahams-Curiel Department of Foreign Literatures & Linguistics

Academic year 2023-24 (תשפ"ד)

Course title (English):   The meaning of metaphors and similes

Course title (Hebrew):

המשמעות של מטפורות ודימויים

Course number: 133.1.0114+133.1.0124

Course slot (semester/s, weekday/s, hours): Year, Su 12-14

Lecturer: Ariel Cohen

Lecturer's conference hour and contact details:
Email: arikc@bgu.ac.il
Phone: 08-6461137
Office hours: To Be Announced

Course description & objectives:
When we use a metaphor like "John is a snake," we don't really mean to say that John is a reptile. But what do we mean? Since ancient time, researchers have debated this question. One of the widely held theories is that the meaning is "John is like a snake," i.e. the meaning of a metaphor is a simile. where the word "like" is phonologically null. Other researchers, however, have argued that there are significant differences between metaphors and similes. In this course we will examine the arguments for both sides. We will find that the question is a multi-disciplinary one, and we will need, in addition to linguistics, to use insights from philosophy, psychology, and computer science.

Course requirements:
Attendance is not required

The grade will be calculated as follows:
 In-class exam (20%)
 Seminar outline (10%)
 A seminar paper (70%).
The seminar paper will be on a topic you choose (and I approve) which is relevant to the course. Before starting to work on the paper, you will be asked to submit a brief outline, describing your chosen topic and the bibliography. The outline must include your e-mail address, so I can tell you if it is approved. Note that unless your outline is submitted and approved, your seminar paper will not be graded, and your grade for it will be zero.

Your seminar paper should not be merely a repetition of what was discussed in class; it should add to it, both in terms of additional sources and in terms of issues, viewpoints and ideas. I will expect the paper to be clearly written, coherently organized, proofread and typed. It should be about 10 pages in length (double spaced).

Topics & bibliography
Will be assigned