

# Language and Mind - Video course

## COURSE OUTLINE

Language learning can be put under three broad perspectives. Some believe language is pairing of lexicon and syntax i.e. of words and the set of rules that defines how we can combine those words most fundamental of these rules are innate i.e. they are already there in the human mind before it is exposed to society. This means there is perhaps an innate Language Faculty. Still others believe that General Cognitive Abilities that account for other kinds of learning can also account for language. There are many others who strongly believe that language is essentially socially embedded and that all learning takes place through social interactions. This course will briefly account for the most convincing position and will argue for it from generative perspective and biological foundations of language. Throughout the course we will try to be familiar with relationship between language and human mind; to understand language as a special purpose cognitive ability; and to understand underlying mental computation for natural language processing.

## COURSE DETAIL

**Week One- On Language**  
What is Language?



# NPTEL

<http://nptel.ac.in>

## Humanities and Social Sciences

### Additional Reading:

- Chomsky, N. (2006). *Language and Mind*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Harris, C.L. (2003). 'Language and cognition'. *Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*. London: MacMillan.
- Hauser, M.D., Chomsky, N., and Fitch, W.T. (2002). 'Faculty of language: What is it, who has it, and how did it evolve?' *Science*, 298, 1569-1579.
- Jackendoff, R. (1993). *Patterns in human mind*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Jackendoff, R. (2014). 'How did language begin?' Retrieved from <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/files/LanguageBegin.pdf>
- Pinker, S. and Jackendoff, R. (2004). 'The faculty of language: What's special about it?' *Cognition*, 95, 201-236.
- Pool, G. (2011). *Syntactic theory (2 ed)*. London/New York: Palgrave Macmillan

### Coordinators:

**Rajesh Kumar**  
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences IIT Madras

What is scientific about language?  
How is language constitutive of being human?  
Distinction between human and non-human language  
Origin of language  
What is the relationship between language and mind?  
How do children acquire language?  
Nature of learning language  
Generative foundation of language acquisition  
Biological foundation of Language  
Language acquisition device  
Universal grammar

### **Week Two- Language in Mind**

Acquisition and/or learning  
I-language and Innateness  
Patterns – Universal Grammar  
Human Brain  
Language deficit/ loss

### **Week Three- Patterns in sounds and words**

Sounds  
Vowels/Consonants  
Places and manners of articulation  
Features of sounds

### **Week Four- Words and sentences**

Words  
Constraints of patterns in words  
Cluster as constraints  
Syllables

### **Week Five- Grammar**

Parts of sentences  
Subjects/ Predicates  
Lexical categories  
Functional categories  
Nature of verbs

### **Week Six- Advanced Grammar**

Complement/ adjunct  
Restrictions  
Semantic relations  
Case  
Movement

### **Week Seven- Levels of representation and principles of grammar**

Movement/displacement  
Motivation for the movement  
Complementizer phrase  
Case assignment  
Passive morphology and NP  
movement  
D structure  
Binding theory  
Indices and antecedents  
Co-indexing  
Constraints

**Week Eight- On language and  
mind**

Compound verb  
Negation  
Language and Cognition  
Goal of cognitive sciences  
Computational linguistics- goals,  
breakthroughs and challenges  
Language and mind