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 the 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?

Additional Reading:


Coordinators:

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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

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