**Neurosyntax and fundamentals of neurolinguistics**

Lecturer: Andrea Moro

H: 10
Credits: 2
Semester: I
Compulsory course: A

*Description*

Neurolinguistics aims at studying the correlates between (the computation of) linguistic structures and the neurophysiological response of the brain as one can infer from the quantitative measures obtained by different techniques (mainly, neuroimaging and electrophysiological methods). This new field was made possible by the revolution of generative grammar whose project is twofold: decomposing the complexity of traditional linguistic taxonomies into the interaction of more primitive entities, and by doing so defining the class of "possible human language". Accordingly, in the first part of the course the fundamental ideas of general linguistics will be addressed, in particular, syntax which constitutes the exclusive boundary between all human languages and all the other systems of communications of living creatures. In the second part of the course we will approach neurolinguistic main methods and foundational results by addressing three case studies: impossible languages, negation and the novel field of inner speech reconstruction.

*Readings*

1. Chomsky, N. 2018 *Il mistero del linguaggio*, Cortina Editore, Milano.
2. Everaert, M. – Huybregts, M. – Berwick, R. – Chomsky, N. – Tattersall, I. – Moro, A. – Boluhis, J. J. "What is language and how could it have evolved?" (2017), *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, Trends In Cognitive Sciences (TICS), p. 1-21, Vol 8.
3. Friederici, A. – Chomsky, N. – Berwick, R. – Moro, A. – Bulhuis, J. (2017) "Language, mind and Brain", *Nature Human Behaviour*, Vol. 1 pp. 713 – 722 DOI: 10.1038/s41562-017-0184-4.
4. Kandell, E. – Hudspeth, "Overall Perspective" in *Principles of Neural Science* Fifth Edition (Kandell et al. eds), p. 5-18, McGraw-Hill, New York.
5. Moro, A. 2015 *The Boundaries of Babel* (Second Edition), MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
6. Moro, A. 2016 *Impossible Languages*, MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts.

*Evaluation*

The evaluation will be based on an oral exam.

**Calendar:**

November 5th, 2018 - 14:00 – 17:00
November 6th, 2018 - 10:00-13:00
November 12th, 2018 - 10:00-13:00 – 14:00-15:00

Classroom 1-14: November 5th and 6th
Classroom 1-15: November 12th.