
	Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań
	Doctoral School of Languages and Literatures 
	Nonfinite structures. Theory and change
	prof. UAM dr hab. Dominika Skrzypek
Sciences/ discipline	Humanities / Linguistics
Type of classes	seminar
Language of instruction	English
The number of hours + form of passing classes	20 hours / credit of a grade
Aims and scope	<p>Finiteness is a linguistic concept notoriously difficult to define and to apply in either diachronic or typological research. The notion of finiteness involves a grouping of verb forms into two classes, finite versus nonfinite. The term itself goes back to the Latin <i>finitus</i>, the perfective participle of the verb <i>finio</i>, ‘finish, limit’, illustrating the traditional view that finite verb forms are ‘limited’ by categories such as person, number, tense or mood, etc., while nonfinite verb forms (e.g., infinitive, participles, gerunds) are not marked for these categories. The formal distinction is mirrored by the functional one, so that only finite verb forms can be the (only) predicate of independent sentences, while the nonfinite verb forms are reserved for other syntactic functions, like attributes, arguments or adverbials, and occur exclusively or predominantly in dependent contexts.</p> <p>The traditional approaches are rooted in the study of Indo-European languages, where finiteness is strongly correlated with the morphological distinctions. Through studies of non-Indo-European languages it has been observed that the purely inflectional approach to finiteness does not have a universal application. In a number of languages the relevant categories do not correlate and the forms classified as nonfinite may lack some categories but not others or can be used as the only predicate of a main clause. Thus, cross-linguistically, the notion of finiteness has proven to be elusive and not necessarily universal. It remains understudied diachronically, as there is little research showing the changes in finiteness over time.</p> <p>The aim of the seminar is to present the problem of defining finiteness, discuss the gradience of the category, possible strategies to delineate finite and nonfinite forms (and their limitations), as well as their typology and to discuss the consequences of the adopted definitions for language research, especially typological, comparative or diachronic.</p> <p>A secondary aim of the course is to encourage students to read about</p>

	linguistics and discuss linguistic concepts in English, preparing them for their own research and participation in international conferences.
Learning content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction: the concept of finiteness. Features of finite vs nonfinite categories. 2. Typology of nonfinite forms: masdar, participle, converb, infinitive. 3. Action nominals (masdars). 4. Participles: past, present, passive, active. 5. Converbs. 6. Finiteness as a gradient or scalar concept. 7. Finiteness in diachrony. 8. Finiteness in typology. 9. Finiteness in language acquisition. 10. Assessment.
Entry requirements	no
Learning outcomes	
	Verification methods:
<p>In terms of knowledge: A person who has completed classes knows and understands:</p> <p>the achievements of world science in the discipline in which the education takes place, as well as the paradigms and directions of development of this discipline, in a way that enables their creative and innovative development and their verification within the framework of research projects undertaken [E_W01];</p> <p>at an advanced level research methodology appropriate for the discipline of science in which education takes place, which allows for proper selection of research theories and tools and their effective application and modification within the framework of own research [E_W02]</p> <p>fundamental dilemmas of contemporary civilization and the role of science, especially in the field of education, in solving them. [E_W08]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A conversation on a selected topic. The point of departure is one of the lectures, supplemented with literature (from the list given for each topic or your own suggestion). Assessment in pairs or groups of three if you like. 2. Submitting a short description for the Preludium grant application (note: for people planning to submit an application in the June 2024 edition, the latest submission deadline, due to the application deadlines at the NCN, is April 15).
<p>In terms of skills: A person who has completed classes is able to:</p> <p>use knowledge from various disciplines of science to creatively identify, formulate and innovatively solve complex research problems or perform advanced research tasks.</p> <p>In particular, he/she is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — define the objectives and the subject of scientific research, — formulate research hypotheses, 	

<p>— develop research methods, techniques and tools and apply them creatively and effectively, draw conclusions on the basis of scientific evidence [E_U01];</p> <p>effectively retrieve information related to scientific activity from various sources, including from sources in foreign languages, and to properly select, critically analyse and interpret this information; furthermore, he/she is able to assess its relevance for scientific development [E_U02];</p> <p>establish and implement scientific cooperation in research teams, including international ones [E_U07];</p> <p>transfer the results of scientific activity to the socio-economic sphere in cooperation with institutions from the social and economic environment [E_U08]</p>	
<p>In terms of social competences: A person who has completed classes is prepared to:</p> <p>critical evaluation of the work in the field of the scientific discipline within which the education is provided and its own contribution to the development of this discipline [E_K01];</p> <p>fulfilling social obligations as a researcher; initiating actions in favour of the public interest, <i>inter alia</i>, through appropriate dissemination of scientific achievements in society. Furthermore, he/she is ready to take actions leading to the development of civil society based on knowledge [E_K03];</p> <p>thinking and acting in an entrepreneurial way, creating new ideas and searching - in cooperation with people from other disciplines - for innovative solutions, as well as taking up challenges and intellectual risk in the scientific and public spheres and taking responsibility for the consequences of their decisions [E_K04];</p> <p>continuous improvement of professional competence and personal development, in particular by tracking and analyzing the latest developments in the represented scientific discipline [E_K05]</p>	<p>1. A conversation on a selected topic. The point of departure is one of the lectures, supplemented with literature (from the list given for each topic or your own suggestion). Assessment in pairs or groups of three if you like.</p> <p>2. Submitting a short description for the Preludium grant application (note: for people planning to submit an application in the June 2024 edition, the latest submission deadline, due to the application deadlines at the NCN, is April 15).</p>
<p>Literature</p>	<p>Bary, Corien & Dag Haug (2011). Temporal anaphora across and inside sentences: The function of participles. <i>Semantics & Pragmatics</i> 4, Article 8, p. 1–56</p> <p>Bisang, Walter (2007). Categories that make finiteness: discreteness from a functional perspective and some of its repercussions. W: Nikolaeva, Irina Alekseevna (ed.) (2007). <i>Finiteness: theoretical and empirical foundations</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 115-137</p> <p>Chamoreau, Claudine & Estrada Fernández, Zarina (eds) (2016). <i>Finiteness and</i></p>

- nominalization*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company
- Gretsch, Petra & Clive Perdue (2007). Finiteness in first and second language acquisition. In: Nikolaeva, Irina Alekseevna (ed.) (2007). *Finiteness: theoretical and empirical foundations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 250-303
- Haspelmath, Martin (1990). The converb as a linguistically valid category. In: König, Ekkehard & Haspelmath, Martin (eds) (1995). *Converbs in cross-linguistic perspective: structure and meaning of adverbial verb forms - adverbial participles, gerunds*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 1-55
- Lowe, John J. (2015). *Participles in Rigvedic Sanskrit. The Syntax and Semantics of Adjectival Verb Forms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Miller, Gary (2002). *Nonfinite structures in theory and change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Nikolaeva, Irina Alekseevna (2007). Introduction. In: Nikolaeva, Irina Alekseevna (ed.) (2007). *Finiteness: theoretical and empirical foundations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 1-21
- Perlmutter, David M. (2007). In what ways can finite and nonfinite clauses differ? Evidence from Russian. In: Nikolaeva, Irina Alekseevna (ed.) (2007). *Finiteness: theoretical and empirical foundations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 250-303
- Shagal, Ksenia & Pavel Rudnev & Anna Volkova (2022). Multifunctionality and syncretism in non-finite forms: an introduction. *Folia Linguistica* 56:3, p. 529-557
- Yliskoski, Juri (2003). Defining Non-finites: Action Nominals, Converbs and Infinitives, *SKY Journal of Linguistics* 16, p. 185-237