

## Competences that you should have acquired by the end of the semester

1. You should not learn the wording of definitions by heart, but understand the phenomenon and be able to **recognize and classify** a phenomenon in different contexts.
2. You should see that one and the same term may be differently used **in everyday language and in linguistic terminology** (e.g. *dialect*).
3. (a) You should be able to distinguish **language, or form, vs. world or concept** (e.g. the word *chips* denotes the concept “very thin pieces of fried potato” in the US and the concept “long thin pieces of potato that are fried and eaten hot” in the UK);  
(b) you should be able to distinguish **form vs. function** (e.g. the sentence *Can you open the window?* is formally a question, but functionally a request);  
(c) you should be able to distinguish **spelling vs. pronunciation** (e.g. <th> vs. [ð] and [θ]).
4. You should be able to reduce complex contexts and extract the specific and the generalizable features, in other words: you should **be able to find out rules**.
5. You should understand that **different speech communities organize the world and their thoughts differently** (e.g. the banana is seen as a fruit in Europe, but as a vegetable in Latin America, the cucumber is a berry for the expert, but a vegetable for the layperson; e.g. the use of tenses and aspects in different languages).
6. You should be able to **carry out error analyses** and understand why different learner groups have different difficulties with a foreign language (e.g. interference from mother tongue and over-generalization).
7. (a) You should understand the **natural causes of language variation** (e.g. different patterns serve for analogies, changing needs in expressions, “Speak like the others!” vs. “Don’t speak like the others!”) without evaluating linguistic forms and  
(b) nevertheless keep in mind **the specific role of the standard variety**, whose command acts as an indicator for education.
8. You should see that Aristotelian definitions with clear edges through plus and minus features are rather seldom possible; mostly, a phenomenon, or category, has **fuzzy edges with more (proto-)typical and more peripheral members** (e.g. what is a fruit? what is “young”?) and can often only be defined by more prototypical and more peripheral features (a bird is usually able to fly).
9. You should distinguish **description vs. evaluation** of forms and, as a linguist, should focus on description first.
10. You should be able to explain linguistic phenomena in a way that is **precise and methodologically correct, but also intelligible** to laypersons.