

Linguistics 2320: Introduction to Linguistics (*Hybrid*)
(also ANTH 2320/ENGL 2320)
Spr '17

Lecturer: Prof. Nicholas Sobin
Office & Hours: LART 2-3:25 p.m. M&W, and by appointment
Text: *Language Files*, 11th ed.

Subject matter: This course covers a broad range of topics which can be divided into two general types: first, the core areas of linguistic analysis and second the other areas of linguistics and language study which rely on those core areas. By the term core areas of linguistic analysis, I am referring to study of the various basic systems of language which together make up the ‘grammar’ of a human language system. These include phonetics (the sounds of language), phonology (pronunciation systems), morphology (how words are built), syntax (how sentences are built), and semantics (the meaning of the things we utter). By the ‘other’ areas of linguistics, the ones which rely on these core areas, I am referring to areas such as socio-linguistics, psycho-linguistics, and historical linguistics. These areas make crucial use of the core linguistic systems (such as phonology or syntax) in trying to investigate other aspects, uses, or functions of human language. Sociolinguistics deals with topics such as regional and social dialect variation, linguistic style, and some aspects of language change. Historical linguistics deals more comprehensively with the mechanics of language change and evolution. Psycho-linguistics studies various aspects of the mental representation of language. One of the classic areas of psycho-linguistics is the study of how languages are learned, both by children and adults. Adult language acquisition and ‘bilingualism’ have become central areas of study in what is called ‘applied linguistics.’

Course work/meetings: This is a hybrid course. The main lectures are provided on-line via BlackBoard. Please read the assigned text and the on-line lecture materials carefully and closely before coming to class. Also, many of the lectures have accompanying exercises in linguistic analysis, and every lecture has a follow-up set of questions typical of what might appear on the relevant exam. Go through all of these materials before the relevant class meeting. We will meet on the Tuesday of each week to hit the high points, answer questions, review problems, and give exams.

Learning Outcomes: In completing this course, you will become acquainted with the various major areas of research in Linguistics. In particular, you should

- learn the phonetic alphabet (IPA) and phonetic transcription
- learn how words are composed of smaller meaningful elements
- learn how to discover the vocabulary elements of a language
- learn basics of elementary sentence analysis and syntax-based meaning
- become acquainted with the fundamentals of analyzing systems of pronunciation
- become acquainted with core aspects of how languages are learned (acquired)
- become acquainted with core aspects of dialect research
- become acquainted with core aspects of how languages change through time & how to reconstruct extinct languages.

Course grade: There will be 4 exams (firm dates to be announced). The purpose of spreading out the exam work is so that there is more coherence/focus in your exam preparations, given the large number and variety of topics covered. The grade for the course will be determined as follows (for students in regular attendance):

Exam 1-intro concepts/morphology 20%

Exam 2-syntax/syntax-based semantics 20%

Exam 3-phonetics/phonology 20%

Exam 4-lg acquisition/lg variation/lg change/general review 20%

Scored responses to lecture questions 20%

The tentative date for each exam appears in the schedule below.

Useful ground rules and housekeeping hints:

Please be sure that all e-communications are switched “off”. Do not use cell phones, etc. during the class for talking, texting, etc. They are a huge distraction. Cell phones, etc. are strictly forbidden in any exam situation.

Please avoid ‘casual’ absences. Any absence will present difficulties since we necessarily cover a lot of material in a course of this nature, and since much of the material is ‘cumulative’. Two weeks of absences are allowed without penalty, excepting absences on dates on which an assignment is due or an exam is being given. At the professor's discretion, when a student has missed more than 2 weekly class sessions, (s)he may be dropped from the course with a ‘W’ before the drop date or with a ‘W’ or ‘F’ after that date. For details, refer to the Undergraduate Catalog.

A student may also be dropped at the professor's discretion for various behaviors which in the professor's opinion may compromise the delivery or the intellectual integrity of the class (e.g. talking, phoning, texting, browsing, etc. during class, looking in the direction of someone else's test paper, failing to bring requisite test materials to an examination, etc.).

Please arrive on time, and please do not leave early. Either is very disruptive to both the students and the professor. An early departure may be counted as an absence. If there is a good reason that you have to leave early, please let me know before-hand.

Be present for all examinations. It is your responsibility to do so. By university policy, a missed exam results in a grade of ‘0%’ for that exam, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the professor. Refer to the Undergraduate Catalog for details.

Exams will require a Scantron form (normally no. 882-E, except for the Syntax exam), a #2 pencil, and a good eraser. Be sure that you have these with you for each exam, since the department cannot provide them. All of these things are available in the bookstore.

If you have questions, or even if you're just curious about something that may be related to what we're working on, please ask. I also learn things from your questions and observations. Feel free to come by during office hours. That's what they're for.

Human language is a large and a fascinating topic. The popular misconceptions about language are many, and few people are aware of some of the most basic and interesting aspects of human language. Have fun with it. I hope that you enjoy our study of it, and that this study will heighten your interest in what has become one of the major frontiers in cognitive science -- linguistics.

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.utep.edu/CASS.

Proposed Spring '17 Schedule (This schedule is *tentative* and *may be altered as necessary*.):

- Wk 1 Reading: LF, Ch 1 & 14-Introduction & animal communication;
Introduction Lectures 1, 2, & 3 (BB)
Topics: What's language? What's linguistics? Design features; animal languages; primate experiments
- Wk 2 Reading: LF Ch 2-Phonetics & Ch 4-Morphology;
Phonetics Lecture 1; Unit 3-Morphology Lecture 1 (BB)
Topics: Intro to phonetic alphabet; transcription (prelim to Morphology); some basic terms & concepts of morphology
- Wk 3 Reading: Morphology Lectures 2 & 3 (BB)
Topics: More basic terms; derivation, inflection & word formation rules; hierarchic morphology; homophony and allomorphy; morphology in other languages
- Wk 4 Exam 1: Intro/Phonetic alphabet/Morphology
- Wk 5 Reading LF Chs 5-Syntax;
Syntax Lectures 1 & 2 (BB)
Topics: Basic properties of syntax; tests of phrasehood; tree structure; trees; phrase structure grammar; terms; theory of grammaticality;
- Wk 6 Readings; Syntax Lecture 3 (BB)
Topics: Recursive syntax (S embedding, NP adjuncts; coordination); a system of sentential semantics (GFs & argument structure); structural ambiguity
- Wk 7 Exam 2: Syntax & Syntax-based Semantics

Wk 8 Reading: LF Ch 2-Phonetics (review);
Phonetics Lectures 1 (review), 2, & 3 (BB)
Topics: Review of phonetic alphabet; articulatory phonetics; description of segments & natural classes

Spring Brk (March 13-17)

Wk 9 Reading: LF Ch 3-Phonology;
Phonology Lectures 1 & 2 (BB)
Topics: Phones, phonemes, & allophones; tests for phonemic/allophonic status; phonological rules & derivations

Wk 10 Reading: Phonology Lecture 3 (BB)
Topics: English derivational phonology; operating the tests on other languages & derivations

Wk 11 Exam 3: Phonetics/Phonology

Wk 12 Reading: LF Chs 8-Language Acquisition;
Language Acquisition Lectures 1 & 2 (BB)
Topics: The 'logical' problem; stages of acquisition; acquisition of sounds, WHQs, & morphology; theories of acquisition

Wk 13 Reading: LF Ch 10-Language Variation & Ch 12-Language Contact;
Language Variation Lectures 1, 2, & 3 (BB)
Topics: Basic concepts; regional dialects; social dialects; ethnic varieties (AAE); sex-differentiated speech

Wk 14 Reading: LF Ch 13-Language Change;
Language Change Lectures 1 & 2 (BB)
Topics: Pidgins & creoles; factors of language change; Jones, Grimm's Law; comparative reconstruction & PIE

Wk 15 Topics: Lexical change; phonological change; morpho-syntactic change;

Finals: Exam 4: Language acquisition/language variation/language change/general concepts from throughout the course