

LING 211 – Introduction to Linguistic Analysis

Section 01: TTh 10:30–11:50 AM, Eliot 103

Section 02: TTh 01:10–02:30 PM, Eliot 103

Course Syllabus

Fall 2014

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PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course, other than an interest in language. Some familiarity with traditional grammar terms such as *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *syllable*, *consonant*, *vowel*, *phrase*, *clause*, *sentence*, etc., would be useful, but is by no means required.

CONTENT AND FOCUS OF THE COURSE

This course is an introduction to the scientific study of human language. Starting from basic questions such as “What is language?” and “What do we know when we know a language?”, we investigate the human language faculty through the hands-on analysis of naturalistic data from a variety of languages spoken around the world. We adopt a broadly *cognitive* viewpoint throughout, investigating language as a system of knowledge within the mind of the language user (a *mental grammar*), which can be studied empirically and represented using formal models.

In order to make this task simpler, we will generally treat languages as though they were static systems. For example, we will assume that it is possible to describe language structures *synchronically*, ignoring the fact that languages constantly change over time. In addition, we will generally abstract away from *variation* within speech communities based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, social class, dialect region, and level of formality. Variation and change are very important aspects of the study of language, but they are covered in depth in a separate course, Linguistics 212 *Introduction to Language, Culture, and Society*.

This course is roughly divided into six units. We begin with a brief overview of the field and discuss some of the goals and methods of linguistic analysis. The main part of the course surveys the core sub-fields of linguistic analysis, listed below, each of which focuses on a different domain of organization (or *module*) within mental grammar. We also touch on Chomsky’s *Universal Grammar* hypothesis, and consider which aspects of mental grammar (if any) are innate and universal, and which aspects are learned and specific to particular languages.

- (1) *Morphology*: The abstract rules/constraints governing the internal structure of words, how they are formed, their categories, and how they are related to other words in the speaker’s ‘mental lexicon’.
- (2) *Syntax*: Principles governing how words are combined to form phrases and sentences.
- (3) *Semantics, pragmatics*: The relationship between linguistic form and linguistic meaning/use. How words are interpreted, how the meanings of phrases and sentences are computed on the basis of the

meanings of their parts, and how speakers employ linguistic expressions to perform communicative tasks (making assertions, asking questions, issuing commands, etc.).

- (4) *Phonetics*: The sounds – or more broadly, gestures – of human languages, their acoustic and physiological properties, and how they are classified, produced, and perceived.
- (5) *Phonology*: How speech sounds are organized into systems of contrast, and the abstract rules or constraints governing how sounds are combined, as well as larger units of speech such as syllables, words, and phrases.

Naturally we won't have time to explore any of these topics in depth. Our goal is to give you a broad overview of the field, and to acquaint you with some of the research questions and debates with which linguists are currently engaged. Throughout the course, we focus on *doing analysis*—developing sound argumentation and problem-solving skills, learning to identify and analyze data in order to construct productive, testable hypotheses about what the principles of grammar are. We hope to make you aware of the complexity and sophistication of your own (largely unconscious) linguistic knowledge, and in so doing, inspire you to question some of your own preconceptions about how language works.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, GRADING, AND POLICIES

Participation (20% of course grade). Students are expected to attend every class meeting and participate on a regular basis, and may also be asked to participate in Moodle forums or other online activities.

Problem sets (60% of course grade). There will be six problem sets, handed out and due every two or three weeks. Each problem set is worth approximately 10% of the total course grade. Problem sets will be handed out and due in class (dates listed below). On the day a problem set is handed out in class, an electronic version will also be posted on the course Moodle page.

<i>problem set</i>	<i>handed out</i>	<i>due in class</i>	<i>graded by</i>
(1) Morphology/syntax	September 9	September 23	Matt
(2) Syntax	September 23	October 9	Matt
(3) Syntax/semantics	October 9	October 28	Matt
(4) Phonetics	October 28	November 6	Sameer
(5) Phonology	November 6	November 20	Sameer
(6) Phonology/morphology	November 20	December 4	Sameer

Given the size of this class, we strongly prefer that you submit your assignments in hard copy form. However, in cases of last-minute printer failure or other emergencies, we will also accept assignments as email attachments (in PDF format, emailed to the professor grading the problem set). Your answers must be *typed*, except where otherwise indicated. *Handwritten assignments will not be accepted.*

Assignments must be turned in on time if you wish to receive full credit and comments. Extensions will be granted only in cases of illness, family emergency, etc., at the discretion of the instructor grading the assignment. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized 10% of total possible points for each full day they are late. Late assignments will not be accepted for credit if turned in after the problem set has been returned to students, or discussed in class, whichever comes first. Moreover, late assignments may not be returned in a timely fashion.

Because it is impossible to do good science in a vacuum, you are encouraged (indeed, expected) to work on problem sets together. So introduce yourself to your fellow students and form a study group today! That said, you must write up your answers *separately* and *in your own words*: copying or collaboration on write-ups will be treated as academic dishonesty and a violation of the Honor Principle. You should feel free to come see Sameer or Matt, or consult with one of the course tutors, if you're having difficulty with the homework. It is perfectly legitimate to seek help on an assignment *before* it is due—in fact, we encourage it! We are always willing to discuss any aspect of the course, so please take advantage of our services.

Final exam (20% of course grade). The course concludes with an untimed comprehensive take-home exam. The exam will be closed book and closed notes, and will consist of data analysis questions like the ones on the problem sets. Additional details will be provided later in the course. Most likely the exam will be handed out on the Thursday after the last day of classes and due one week later.

RESOURCES

Moodle. We have set up a Moodle page for this course. You can use this page to post your questions and responses to others' questions; coordinate study sessions; and download e-reserve readings, problem sets, extra copies of the syllabus, etc. You are encouraged to check the Moodle page regularly for updates to the syllabus, additional readings, and forum discussions. We may occasionally require that you use Moodle to post questions (or answers to questions) based on the readings and class discussions. Also, if you miss a class, you can go to the Moodle page to download copies of any handouts given out that day (these should be posted to Moodle by the end of the day).

Websites. The resources page listed below includes links to sites with downloadable fonts, tools, and formatting packages, language-related blogs, animation and sound files, directories, FAQs, and other useful information.

Reed Linguistics Department homepage: <http://academic.reed.edu/linguistics/>
Resources for linguistics students: <http://academic.reed.edu/linguistics/resources.html>

Tutoring services. You should always feel free to consult Sameer or Matt for extra help on the problem sets. In addition, a number of students are available for peer-to-peer tutoring. For a list of tutors, go to <http://info.reed.edu/tutor/tutors.taf> and scroll down to LING 211.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

This schedule lists the topics for class discussion, assigned readings, and the deadlines for written work and other assignments. M (= Matt) and S (= Sameer) designate the discussion leader(s) for the week.

There is no single textbook for this course. Instead we will read selections from different textbooks, along with articles and book chapters from various sources. All readings are available through the library on print reserve, on e-reserve (accessible through Moodle), or directly from us. Call numbers for books on print reserve are given in square brackets. Reading assignments are listed under the week for which they should be completed, in the approximate order in which you should tackle them. Unless we notify you otherwise, readings are to be completed by the beginning of class on Thursday of the week for which they are assigned. Readings may be added, dropped, or shifted around as we go along.

(1) Tuesday, September 2 – Thursday, September 4

Introduction (M,S) : *What is language? What is linguistics? Definitional properties and universals of human language. Overview of the course.*

Reading:

- Lyons, *Language and Linguistics: An Introduction* / chapter 1, "Language" (pp. 1-31); chapter 2, "Linguistics" (pp. 34-64). [P121.L96 1981 / e-reserve]
- Hockett, *The View From Language: Selected Essays 1948-1974* / chapter H8, "The Problem of Universals in Language" (pp. 163-185). [P27.H45 / e-reserve]
 - N.B.: Concentrate on sections 1-3 of the Hockett article (pp. 163-179); section 4 contains a number of technical terms which will be introduced later.
- Jackendoff, *Patterns in the Mind: Language and Human Nature* / chapters 1-7 (pp. 3-98). [P37.J33 1994]

(2) Tuesday, September 9 – Thursday, September 11

Morphology (M) : *Morphological analysis and the 'form first' principle. Morphemes and morpho-lexical categories. Concatenative word formation (affixation and compounding).*

Reading:

- Shopen (ed.), *Languages and Their Speakers* / chapter 1, Craig, "Jacaltec: Field Work in Guatemala" (pp. 3-57). [P106.L318 1987]
- Haspelmath and Sims, *Understanding Morphology* (2nd ed.) / chapter 1, "Introduction", sections 1.1-1.3 (pp. 1-9); chapter 2, "Basic concepts" (pp. 14-29). [P241.H37 2010 / e-reserve]
- Kroeger, *Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction* / chapter 2, "Analyzing word structure" (pp. 7-25). [P126.K76 2005 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- Problem set 1 handed out in class on Tuesday.

(3) Tuesday, September 16 – Thursday, September 18

Morphology (M) : *Problems for the concept 'morpheme': non-concatenative word formation and suppletion.*

Syntax (M) : *Syntactic data and generalizations: acceptability and grammaticality judgements.*

Reading:

- Haspelmath and Sims, *Understanding Morphology* (2nd ed.) / chapter 3, "Rules" (pp. 34-54). [P241.H37 2010 / e-reserve]
- Radford, *Transformational Grammar: A First Course* / chapter 1, "Goals" (pp. 1-46). [P158.R29 1988 / e-reserve]

(4) Tuesday, September 23 – Thursday, September 25

Syntax (M) : *Phrase structure trees. Constituent structure and ambiguity. Heads and phrases. Practice with tree drawing and tests for constituency. Arguments versus adjuncts.*

Reading:

- Ouhalla, *Introducing Transformational Grammar* (2nd ed.) / chapter 2, "Phrase structure" (pp. 17-40). [P158.O94 1999 / e-reserve]
- Radford, *Transformational Grammar: A First Course* / chapter 2, "Structure" (pp. 50-105). [P158.R29 1988 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- **Problem set 1 due in class on Tuesday.**
- Problem set 2 handed out in class on Tuesday.

(5) Tuesday, September 30 – Thursday, October 2

Syntax (M) : *Movement transformations. Deep structure versus surface structure. Wh-questions and subject-auxiliary inversion. Structure preservation and traces.*

Reading:

- Ouhalla, *Introducing Transformational Grammar* (2nd ed.) / chapter 4, “Transformations I: Phrasal categories” (pp. 61-89). [P158.O94 1999 / e-reserve]
 - N.B.: Concentrate on the first half of the chapter (roughly pp. 61-76).

(6) Tuesday, October 7 – Thursday, October 9

Semantics (M) : *Compositionality. Entailment, presupposition, and other semantic relations. A simple extensional model of semantics. The denotations of quantifiers.*

Reading:

- Fromkin (ed.), *Linguistics: An Introduction to Linguistic Theory* / chapter 7, “Semantics I: Compositionality”, sections 7.0-7.4 (pp. 372-389). [P121.L558 2000 / e-reserve]
- Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet, *Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics* (2nd ed.) / chapter 1, “The empirical domain of semantics” (pp. 1-52). [P325.C384 2000 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- **Problem set 2 due in class on Thursday.**
- Problem set 3 handed out in class on Thursday.

(7) Tuesday, October 14 – Thursday, October 16

Semantics (M) : *More on extensional semantics and quantification. Extensions versus intensions (reference and sense). Pragmatics. Implicature and the structure of conversation.*

Reading:

- Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet, *Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics* (2nd ed.) / chapter 2, “Denotation, truth, and meaning” (pp. 53-110). [P325.C384 2000 / e-reserve]
- Cole and Morgan (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3: Speech Acts* / Grice, “Logic and conversation” (pp. 41-58). [P1.S9.v.3 / e-reserve]

FALL BREAK**(8) Tuesday, October 28 – Thursday, October 30**

Phonetics (S): *Sounds vs. letters: the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The articulation of English sounds: exploring the vocal tract. Transcribing and producing real and nonce words of English using IPA.*

Reading:

- Ladefoged /'lædəfəʊgəd/, *A Course in Phonetics* (5th or 6th ed.) / chapter 1 “Articulation and acoustics” (pp. 1-24); chapter 2 “Phonology and phonetic transcription” (pp. 33-47); chapter 3 “The consonants of English” (pp. 55-76). [P221.L2 2006 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- **Problem set 3 due in class on Tuesday.**
- Problem set 4 handed out in class on Tuesday.
- Links to the following websites are provided on the course Moodle page:
 - Visit the online UCLA Phonetics Lab to listen to sound files of the world’s languages, and practice phonetic symbols using the self-pronouncing IPA chart.

- Visit the University of Iowa's Sounds of Speech to see flash animations of the human vocal tract articulating various sounds in English, Spanish, and German.

(9) Tuesday, November 4 – Thursday, November 6

Phonology (S): *Phonological knowledge: what do we know about speech sounds? Contrast vs. allophony: what counts as "same" or "different" in speech sounds. The local environment analysis.*

Reading:

- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology* / chapter 2 "Phonemic analysis" (pp. 19-46), chapter 3 "More on phonemes" (pp. 47-69). [P217.H346 2009 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- **Problem set 4 due in class on Thursday.**
- Problem set 5 handed out in class on Thursday

(10) Tuesday, November 11 – Thursday, November 13

Phonology (S): *Introduction to features and natural classes.*

Reading:

- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology*, chapter 4 "Features" (pp. 70-102); chapter 6 "Phonological alternation I" (pp. 121-141). [P217.H346 2009 / e-reserve]
- Gussenhoven /ˈχʊsənfiʊvən/ and Jacobs /ˈjakɔps/, *Understanding Phonology* (2nd ed.) / chapter 5 "Distinctive features" (pp. 57-76). [P217.G867 2005 / e-reserve]

(11) Tuesday, November 18 – Thursday, November 20

Phonology (S): *Rule interaction. Underlying forms, abstract representations.*

Reading:

- Gussenhoven and Jacobs, *Understanding Phonology* (2nd ed.) / chapter 6, "Ordered rules". [P217.G867 2005 / e-reserve]
- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology* / chapter 7, "Phonological alternation II". [P217.H346 2009 / e-reserve]

Homework:

- **Problem set 5 due in class on Thursday.**
- Problem set 6 handed out in class on Thursday.

(12) Tuesday, November 25

Morphophonology (S): *Phonologically-conditioned morphological alternations.*

Reading:

- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology* / chapter 8, "Morphophonemic analysis". [P217.H346 2009 / e-reserve]

(13) Tuesday, December 2 – Thursday, December 4

Morphophonology (S): *Phonology of non-concatenative morphology: ablaut, truncation, infixation, reduplication. Questioning the local environment analysis and the morphology–phonology cycle.*

Reading:

- TBA

Homework:

- **Problem set 6 due in class on Thursday.**

(14) Tuesday, December 9

Constraints in phonology and morphophonology (S): *Phonotactics: the grammar of sequences of sounds in languages. Accidental vs. systematic gaps. Phonological repair.*

Reading:

- Kisseberth /'kɪsəbəθ/ (1970), On the functional unity of phonological rules [e-reserve]