

LING 211 - Introduction to Linguistic Analysis

Section 01: TTh 10:30 - 11:50 AM, Vollum 110

Section 02: TTh 1:40 - 3:00 PM, Vollum 110

Course Syllabus Fall 2022

	<i>Sameer ud Dowla Khan</i>	<i>Matt Pearson</i>
pronouns:	they or he	he
office:	Eliot 101C	Vollum 313
email:	skhan@reed.edu	pearsonm@reed.edu
phone:	ext. 4018 (503-517-4018)	ext. 7618 (503-517-7618)
office hours:	Monday, 3:00 – 4:00 PM Wednesday, 3:00 – 5:00 PM Zoom-bookable if needed	Monday, 1:00 – 2:30 PM Tuesday, 3:30 – 5:00 PM or by appointment Mon-Thu

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 certainly not required.

OVERVIEW

Topic of the course. This course is an introduction to the scientific study of human language. Starting from fundamental 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 the course, investigating language as a system of knowledge in the mind of the language user—a *mental grammar*—which can be studied empirically and represented using formal models.

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 a language structure *synchronously* (i.e., as it exists at one specific point in history), 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 dialect, gender, race and ethnicity, socio-economic class, or level of formality. Variation and change are vitally important aspects of the study of language, but they are covered in depth in a separate introductory course, Linguistics 212 *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, offered in the spring. Language variation as it relates to bias and discrimination is also addressed in the no-prerequisite course Linguistics 220 *Language and Discrimination in the United States*.

This course is divided into five units. We begin in the first week with a brief discussion of some of the basic properties of human language that linguistic theories need to take account of. We then survey the core sub-fields of linguistic analysis, listed below, each focusing on a different domain of organization within mental grammar:

- (1) *Morphology*: The abstract rules or constraints governing the internal structure of words, how they are formed, their categories, and how they relate 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 like making assertions, asking questions, issuing commands, etc.
- (4) *Phonetics*: The sounds—or more broadly, linguistic gestures—of human languages, their acoustic and physiological properties, and how they are produced and perceived.
- (5) *Phonology*: How speech sounds are organized into systems of contrast, and the abstract rules or constraints governing how speech sounds are realized, both on their own and when combined with other sounds to form larger speech units such as syllables, words, and phrases.

Naturally we won't have time to explore any of these sub-fields in depth. Our goal is to give you a broad overview of select grammatical phenomena and types of linguistic analysis, and to acquaint you with some of the research questions and debates with which linguists are engaged.

Course goals. Throughout the course, we focus on *doing* linguistics by learning and practicing different types of analysis of natural language data. Skills and experiences you will acquire in this course include:

- (1) Gaining a basic familiarity with some of the technical terminology and concepts of linguistic analysis, enabling you to take upper-division classes in linguistics or read basic linguistic literature.
- (2) Learning some of the formalisms for representing linguistic phenomena in a rigorous way. These include the transcription of English and non-English speech sounds in IPA (the International Phonetic Alphabet), the representation of sound change rules and constraints, the representation of hierarchical sentence structure using tree notation, and the formulation of function-word meanings using tools from mathematical set theory.
- (3) Practicing sound argumentation and problem-solving skills: learning to identify and analyze natural language data in order to construct productive, testable hypotheses about what the principles of grammar are.
- (4) Acquiring some understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity, and of the complexity and sophistication of speakers' tacit linguistic knowledge. By exploring the richness of your own (largely subconscious) intuitions about the language(s) you speak, we hope you will be inspired to challenge some of your preconceptions about how language works.

COURSE FORMAT: EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Evaluation. Letter grades in this course are assigned based on a point system. There are three components of the course grade: participation (20%), problem sets (60%), and an exam (20%).

Participation. Students are expected to attend every class meeting and participate regularly and actively in discussion. Students may also be asked to complete ungraded quizzes, examine data sets to prepare for in-class exercises, or contribute to Moodle forums and other online activities. Other ways to demonstrate engagement with the course include attending office hours, or posting questions and comments on the readings to the Moodle forum.

Problem sets. There will be six problem sets, each of which is worth about 10% of the total course grade. Due dates and times for assignments (subject to change) are given in the table below. Please add these dates to your calendar! Problem sets will be handed out in class and also posted on the course Moodle. You will also be submitting your assignments by uploading them to the Moodle page as PDF documents.

Because it is impossible to do good science in a vacuum, you are encouraged (indeed, expected) to work on data sets together. So introduce yourself to your fellow students and form a study group, or use the Moodle forum to arrange problem set study sessions! Note, however, that you must write up your problem set answers *separately* and *in your own words*: copying or collaborating on write-ups will be considered 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 make use of our services.

<i>problem set</i>	<i>posted to Moodle, distributed in class</i>	<i>assignment is due: upload to Moodle</i>	<i>collected and graded by</i>
(1) Morphology	Tue, September 6	Tue, September 20 5:00pm	Matt
(2) Syntax	Tue, September 20	Thu, October 6 5:00pm	Matt
(3) Syntax/semantics	Thu, October 6	Tue, October 25 5:00pm	Matt
(4) Phonetics	Tue, October 25	Thu, November 3 5:00pm	Sameer
(5) Phonology	Thu, November 3	Thu, November 17 5:00pm	Sameer
(6) Phonology/morphology	Thu, November 17	Thu, December 1 5:00pm	Sameer

Submitting assignments, policy on deadlines and extensions. Problem sets will be collected electronically through Moodle. To upload your assignment, click on the assignment on the Moodle page and click “Add submission”. You can then drag your file to the “File submissions” window. Please submit your assignment as a single file. Since PDF preserves formatting and special characters, we request that you save your file as a PDF document before uploading it.

Assignments must be typed: *handwritten work will not be accepted*. An exception to this is syntax trees, which can be hand-drawn and scanned for insertion into your document. More information on this will be provided when Problem Set 2 is distributed. Resources for drawing trees in your web browser and adding phonetic symbols to your document can be found at academic.reed.edu/linguistics/resources.html, and on the Moodle page.

In order to give you some flexibility in managing your workload, each student is eligible to take a free (i.e., no questions asked) 48-hour extension on one of the six problem sets, or free 24-hour extensions on two of the problem sets. You must request an extension in advance of the due date by contacting the instructor who will be grading that assignment. Please indicate if you would like a 24-hour extension or a 48-hour extension. Additional extensions may be requested under circumstances such as illness or family emergency, or when required to accommodate a documented disability.

In all other cases, assignments must be turned in on time if you wish to receive full credit and comments. Unexcused late assignments *will* be accepted, but will be penalized up to 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 with comments in a timely fashion.

Final exam. The course concludes with an untimed comprehensive take-home exam. The exam will consist of data analysis questions like the ones on the problem sets. It will be closed book and closed notes, and you will be required to work on it individually (no consulting with others). You will be given about 5 days to complete the exam. Additional details will be provided near the end of the course.

RESOURCES

Moodle. Go to the Moodle page for this course to access readings and to download and submit problem sets. Any handouts or other materials distributed in class will also be posted to the Moodle page, so you can go there to download a document if you lose your copy or are absent from class on the day when it is handed out. In addition, we may require that you use the Moodle forum to post questions or participate in online discussions based on the readings and class materials. We also recommend that you use the Moodle forum to post announcements and schedule study sessions with your classmates.

Office hours. Both Matt and Sameer will hold weekly drop-in office hours for the entire semester. *You do not need to make an appointment* to attend office hours: just show up!

Matt — Matt’s office hours will be held Monday 1:00-2:30 PM and Tuesday 3:30-5:00 PM, in Vollum 313. Office hours will be held in person, but you can also attend office hours over Zoom if you email Matt

in advance to make arrangements. Matt is also available Monday through Thursday for appointments outside of office hours. Appointments will be held either in person or over Zoom, depending on mutual availability and preference. Just email Matt if you want to schedule an appointment.

Sameer — Sameer's in-person office hours will be held Monday 3:00-4:00 PM and Wednesday 3:00-5:00 PM in Eliot 101C. Sameer is also Zoom-bookable for shorter meetings that can't wait for drop-in office hours. Email them to arrange one.

Tutoring services. You should always feel free to consult Sameer or Matt for extra help on assignments. In addition, we hope to have students available for peer-to-peer tutoring for this course (availability of tutors varies from semester to semester). Information on tutoring can be found here (a link to this site appears near the top of the course Moodle page): https://www.reed.edu/academic_support/tutoring.html.

Websites. The resources page listed below include links to sites with downloadable fonts, tools and formatting packages, blogs, animation and sound files, directories, and other useful information. Links to these pages can be found on the Moodle.

Reed Linguistics Department homepage:	http://academic.reed.edu/linguistics/
Reed Library linguistics resources:	https://libguides.reed.edu/linguistics/home
Resources for linguistics students:	http://academic.reed.edu/linguistics/resources.html

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

The week-by-week schedule below lists the topics for class discussion, assigned readings, and the deadlines for assignments. These are subject to change as we go along. M (= Matt) and S (= Sameer) designate the discussion section leader(s) for the week.

There is no single textbook for this course. Instead we will read selections from various different sources. There are also some optional YouTube videos assigned during the first half of the course. Readings are required unless listed as optional. All required readings are available from the Moodle page. Some readings are also available on print reserve from the Library (call numbers for books are included 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 the Thursday class meeting of the week in which they are assigned.

(1) Tuesday, August 30 – Thursday, September 1

Introduction (M,S) : *Overview of the course and warm-up exercise: looking for generalizations. What is language? What is linguistics? Definitional properties and universals of human language.*

Reading:

- Lyons, *Language and Linguistics: An Introduction* / chapter 1, "Language" (pp. 1-31); chapter 2, "Linguistics" (pp. 34-64). [P121.L96 1981, Moodle]
- Hockett, *The View From Language: Selected Essays 1948-1974* / chapter H8, "The Problem of Universals in Language" (pp. 163-185). [P27.H45, Moodle]
 - 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 in the course.
- (optional) Jackendoff, *Patterns in the Mind: Language and Human Nature* / chapters 1-7 (pp. 3-98). [P37.J33 1994]
 - Recommended: Jackendoff's discussion of American Sign Language (pp. 83-95). [Moodle]
- (optional video) "Unit 1: Minimal Pairs" (4:56 minutes) [Moodle]

(2) Tuesday, September 6 – Thursday, September 8

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

Reading:

- 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, Moodle]
- Kroeger, *Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction* / chapter 2, “Analyzing word structure” (pp. 7-25). [P126.K76 2005, Moodle]
- (optional video) “Long and Short Words: Language Typology” (4:36 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) “Waking a Sleeping Language” (2:59 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) “Language Documentation in Ambrym” (5:51 minutes) [Moodle]

Homework:

- Problem Set 1 distributed on Tuesday.

(3) Tuesday, September 13 – Thursday, September 15

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, Moodle]
- (optional video) “Abso-b****y-lutely: Expletive Infixation” (4:57 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) “Morphology of ASL” (2:16 minutes) [Moodle]
- Radford, *Transformational Grammar: A First Course* / chapter 1, “Goals” (pp. 1-46). [P158.R29 1988, Moodle]
- O’Grady, et al. (eds.), *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction* (4th ed.) / chapter 5, O’Grady, “Syntax: The analysis of sentence structure”, sections 1-2 (pp. 184-202). [P121.O35 2001, Moodle]

(4) Tuesday, September 20 – Thursday, September 22

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

Reading:

- Ouhalla, *Introducing Transformational Grammar* (2nd ed.) / chapter 2, “Phrase structure” (pp. 17-40). [P158.O94 1999, Moodle]
- Handout on constituent structure tests (distributed in class and posted to Moodle the previous week)
- Radford, *Transformational Grammar: A First Course* / chapter 2, “Structure” (pp. 50-105). [P158.R29 1988, Moodle]
- (optional video) “Are Sentences More Like a Bracelet or a Mobile?” (5:15 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) “Structural Ambiguity” (4:49 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) “Constituent Recursion” (5:35 minutes) [Moodle]

Homework:

- **Problem Set 1 due on Tuesday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm.**
- Problem Set 2 distributed on Tuesday.

(5) Tuesday, September 27 – Thursday, September 29

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

Reading:

- O'Grady, et al. (eds.), *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction* (4th ed.) / chapter 5, O'Grady, "Syntax: The analysis of sentence structure", sections 3-4 (pp. 202-221). [P121.O35 2001, Moodle]
 - (optional video) "What Wanna Tells Us About (Forming) Questions" (2:07 minutes) [Moodle]
 - (optional video) "Moving Constituents" (14:29 minutes) [Moodle]
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(6) Tuesday, October 4 – Thursday, October 6

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, Moodle]
- 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, Moodle]

Homework:

- **Problem Set 2 due on Thursday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm.**
 - Problem Set 3 distributed on Thursday.
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(7) Tuesday, October 11 – Thursday, October 13

Semantics (M) : *More on extensional semantics and quantification. Polarity items. 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, Moodle]
- Cole and Morgan (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3: Speech Acts* / Grice, "Logic and conversation" (pp. 41-58). [P1.S9.v.3, Moodle]
- (optional video) "The Sentences Computers Can't Understand But Humans Can" (4:41 minutes) [Moodle]
- (optional video) "The Hidden Rules of Conversation" (5:32 minutes) [Moodle]

FALL BREAK

(8) Tuesday, October 25 – Thursday, October 27

Phonetics (S): *Phonetics: articulation, acoustics, perception. Segmentation, orthography, and transcription. Vocal organs. Voicing and manner. Consonants and vowels of American English.*

Reading:

- Ladefoged /lædəfougd/, *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, Moodle]

Homework:

- **Problem Set 3 due on Tuesday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm..**
- Problem Set 4 distributed 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 1 – Thursday, November 3

Phonology (S): *Broad vs. narrow transcription of English. Phonological knowledge: what do we know about speech sounds? Contrast versus 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, Moodle]

Homework:

- **Problem Set 4 due on Thursday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm..**
- Problem Set 5 distributed on Thursday.

(10) Tuesday, November 8 – Thursday, November 10

Phonology (S): *Features of sounds and their natural classes. Assimilation and neutralization.*

Reading:

- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology*, chapter 4 “Features” (pp. 70-102); chapter 6 “Phonological alternation I” (pp. 121-141). [P217.H346 2009, Moodle]
- Gussenhoven /χəsənfiouvən/ and Jacobs /'jakɔps/, *Understanding Phonology* (2nd ed.) / chapter 5 “Distinctive features” (pp. 57-76). [P217.G867 2005, Moodle]

(11) Tuesday, November 15 – Thursday, November 17

Phonology (S): *Abstraction: rule interaction, identifying underlying forms, and positing abstract representations.*

Reading:

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

Homework:

- **Problem Set 5 due on Thursday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm..**
- Problem Set 6 distributed on Thursday.

(12) Tuesday, November 22

Phonology (S): *Syllable structure: syllabification, ambisyllabicity, prosodic boundaries.*

Reading:

- Hayes, *Introductory Phonology* / chapter 13, "Syllables". [P217.H346 2009, Moodle]

(13) Tuesday, November 29 – Thursday, December 1

Phonology (S): *Markedness, phonotactics: accidental vs. systematic gaps, underattestation, constraints.*

Morphophonology (S): *Nonconcatenative morphology: truncation, subtraction, featural morphemes.*

Reading:

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

Homework:

- **Problem Set 6 due on Thursday. Please upload your assignment to Moodle by 5:00pm.**

(14) Tuesday, December 6

Morphophonology (S): *Nonconcatenative morphology: infixation, reduplication.*