

LING S110: Introduction to Linguistics

Course Info

Term:	Summer 2017	Instructor	Sean Gleason
Location:	TBD	Email	sean.gleason@yale.edu
Time:	M,W,F 9:00–11:15 am	Office	Dow Hall 210b
Website:	TBA	Office Hours	TBA

Course Description

We all use language every day, and you may have studied the expressive and stylistic properties of language in other courses. But how can we approach language from a scientific point of view? This course will introduce you to the field of linguistics, a branch of cognitive science whose goal is to understand the human language faculty by uncovering structure at the level of sounds, words, and sentences; examining how this structure maps onto meaning and is processed in the mind and brain; and studying how language is used in society and changes over time.

Objectives

- You will be exposed to a dazzling array of linguistic diversity as well as systematic patterns and crosslinguistic universals that constrain this diversity.
- You will be able to form hypotheses about the human language faculty and use (and even collect your own!) linguistic data to test these hypotheses.
- You will be trained to identify and locate linguistic resources, extract relevant information from them, and cite them following field-specific conventions.
- You will be challenged to examine your attitudes about what language is and how it is used in society and culture.
- You will be prepared for more advanced coursework in linguistics.

Big-picture questions and recurring themes

- What constitutes linguistic data and how can we apply the scientific method to language? To what extent is language innate as opposed to learned?
- What does a native speaker of a language actually know?
- What does it mean for something to be “grammatical” or “ungrammatical”?
- What are the structural units of language? How do we combine these units to form words and sentences that convey meaning?
- Which properties of language are universal? For the properties of language that vary across languages (and across speakers of a single language), what are the limits on this variation?
- How is language change over time related to how language is used in society and how it is acquired by children and adults?
- Are nonstandard language varieties distorted, erroneous, lazy, ignorant versions of the standard variety? Or are these descriptions value judgments about the speakers of these varieties?

Course Expectations & Policies

Expectations

- Prerequisites:** This is an introductory course with no prerequisites. You do not need to have proficiency in any language other than English to be able to take the class.
- Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. We will frequently discuss material in class that isn't covered in the readings, and you are expected to turn in an assignment or take a quiz or exam at the beginning of each class period.
- Readings:** Because our in-class time is limited compared to a semester-long course, it is especially important that you read the assigned readings. You should read them before the date listed on the syllabus, so that you can discuss them that day in class.
- Problem sets:** You will complete 6 problem sets outside of class, each consisting of a few linguistic puzzles to solve and briefly answer questions about. One problem set will ask you to collect data from a native speaker of a language you have never studied. While I prefer problem sets to be typed, they may be handwritten if necessary. They must be submitted on paper; emailed problem sets will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances.
- Language project:** On the first day of class, you will be assigned a minority language to work on for a series of 6 assignments throughout the duration of the course. You may be asked to give brief informal reports in class about your findings. For your final project, you will compile these assignments and lightly revise them in response to my feedback. The 6 language assignments and the final project must all be typed and submitted on paper. Emailed assignments will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances.
- Quizzes:** There will be 2 in-class closed-book quizzes. The second quiz will not cover material that was on the first quiz. Each quiz will take approximately 1 hour to complete.
- Final exam:** The closed-book final exam will be administered during the last class period on August 4. It will be cumulative, covering the entire course. It will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

Grading Breakdown

Problem sets	}	48%
Language project		
Quizzes		30%
Final exam		20%
Participation		2%

Academic Integrity

See below for the course policies on citing your sources and collaborating with classmates. Plagiarism and cheating will be handled as serious offenses (<http://yalecollege.yale.edu/campus-life/undergraduate-regulations>). Please consult <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/using-sources> for useful guidelines on avoid-ing plagiarism and citing appropriately. If you have any further questions about academic integrity, please contact me before submitting your work.

Policies

Course grade: The assignment (whether problem set or language project assignment) on which you receive the lowest score will not count toward your grade in the course.

Late work: Problem sets and language project assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified on the syllabus. Any assignment turned in after this will receive a maximum of 50%. Assignments that are more than one class period late will not be accepted. For example, if an assignment is due on Monday, a late submission will receive up to half credit until the end of class on Wednesday, after which it will receive a zero.

Absences: As stated above, attendance is mandatory. Any absence will be reported to the Yale Summer Session office. If you must miss a class, please email me ahead of time to make arrangements for turning in the assignment that is due. If you miss a class, you alone are responsible for catching up by consulting a classmate. No make-up quizzes or exams will be offered, except in extreme circumstances.

Citing sources: In all of your work, you must cite all sources whose words you quote or ideas you paraphrase, including web-based materials and assigned readings. Please use parenthetical author-year citations in the text (don't put citations in footnotes or endnotes). Your references section should follow the format of the [Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics](#).

Collaboration: You are encouraged to discuss the problem sets with other students; however, you are expected to write up your answers yourself and list the students you collaborated with on the top of each assignment.

Textbook

This is the required textbook for this course:

O'Grady, William, John Archibald, Mark Aronoff & Janie Rees-Miller (eds.). 2017. *Contemporary linguistics: An introduction*. 7th edn. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. isbn: 978-1-319-03977-6.

The book is available at the Yale Bookstore and are on reserve at Bass Library. If you choose to purchase the textbook from another source, please make sure you get the 7th US edition (use the isbn provided above to search). The Canadian and UK editions differ substantially from the version we will be using for this class. I will place the first few readings on the course website in case you are waiting for the textbook to arrive.

Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change, but I will try to adhere to it as closely as possible.

There are readings due every class period except for days when a quiz or exam is administered. The readings listed for Monday, June 1, may be completed before or after our first class meeting, but all other readings should be completed before the date specified. See the Readings section below for full bibliographic information.

Each problem set (PS) and language project assignment (LA) will be assigned two class periods before it is due, except for LA 1, which will be assigned on the first day of class and due on the second day of class.

Date	Day	Topic	Reading Due	Assignment Due
7/3	M	Linguistics as a Cognitive Science, Linguistics Resources	CL 1 (1–13); LF 1.1–1.3 (3–16); SL 19–30, 36–38, 43–46, 63–65	
7/5	W	Morphology	CL 4.0–4.4 (115–135)	LA 1: Bibliography
7/7	F	Morphology, Phonetics	CL 4.5–4.6 (135–146), O’Grady & de Guzman 2010, CL 2.0–2.7 (15–40)	PS 1: Morphology
7/10	M	Phonetics	CL 2.8–2.10 (40–55), LF 2.6 (68–79)	LA 2: Sociolinguistic Context
7/12	W	Phonetics, Phonology	CL 3 (59–106)	PS 2: Phonetics
7/14	F	Quiz 1, Phonology	Study for quiz	LA 3: Phonemic Inventory
7/17	M	Phonology	SL 3 (33–47), SL 4 (51–72)	PS 3: Phonology
7/19	W	Syntax	CL 5.0–5.2 (155–172), CL 5.Appx (194–197), Pullum 2012	LA 4: Morphophonological Processes
7/21	F	Syntax	CL 5.3–5.5 (172–194), CL 5.Appx (197–198), O’Grady 2010b,a	PS 4: Syntax
7/24	M	Quiz 2, Syntax	Study for quiz	LA 5: Word Order
7/26	W	Semantics and Pragmatics	CL 6 (203–239)	PS 5: Fieldwork
7/28	F	Language Acquisition and Change	CL 10 (351–386), CL 7.0–7.5 (245–275)	LA 6: Something Cool
7/31	M	Language Change, Universals, Classification, and Variation	CL 7.6–7.8 (275–290), CL 8 (297–328), Colapinto 2007, Zanuttini 2015	PS 6: Semantics/ Historical
8/2	W	Language in Society, Language Myths & Controversies	CL 14 (485–524), Zanuttini 2014, Kalb 2013	LA 7: Final Language Project
8/4	F	Final Exam	Study for exam	

Readings

- CL. O'Grady, William, John Archibald, Mark Aronoff & Janie Rees-Miller (eds.). 2017. *Contemporary linguistics: An introduction*. 7th edn. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. isbn: 978-1-319-03977-6.
- Colapinto, John. 2007. The interpreter. *The New Yorker* 83(8). April 16, 118–137. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/04/16/the-interpreter-2> (16 April, 2015).
- Kalb, Peggy Edersheim. 2013. Why bad English isn't. *Yale Alumni Magazine* 76(6). July/August, 36–41. <http://www.yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/3716/why-bad-english-isnt> (16 April, 2015).
- LF. Mihalicek, Vedrana & Christin Wilson (eds.). 2011. *Language files: Materials for an introduction to language and linguistics*. 11th edn. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press. isbn: 978-0814251799.
- O'Grady, William. 2010a. Constraints. Online supplement to ch. 5 in O'Grady et al.'s *Contemporary Linguistics*, 6th edn. <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/linguistics6e/pages/bcs-main.asp?v=chapter&s=05000&n=00020&i=05020.04>.
- O'Grady, William. 2010b. Variation. Online supplement to ch. 5 in O'Grady et al.'s *Contemporary Linguistics*, 6th edn. <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/linguistics6e/pages/bcs-main.asp?v=chapter&s=05000&n=00020&i=05020.03>.
- O'Grady, William & Videa de Guzman. 2010. Inflection. Online supplement to ch. 4 in O'Grady et al.'s *Contemporary Linguistics*, 6th edn. <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/linguistics6e/pages/bcs-main.asp?s=04000&n=00020&i=04020.01>.
- Pullum, Geoffrey. 2012. *Being a noun*. The Chronicle of Higher Education Blogs: Lingua Franca. June 20. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/linguafranca/2012/06/20/being-a-noun/> (15 April, 2015).
- SL. Macaulay, Monica. 2011. *Surviving linguistics: A guide for graduate students*. 2nd edn. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press. isbn: 978-1574730296.
- Vanderweide, Theresa, Janie Rees-Miller & Mark Aronoff. 2010. *Contemporary linguistics: An introduction: Study guide*. 6th edn. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. isbn: 978-0312586300.
- Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2014. Our language prejudices don't make no sense. *Pacific Standard*. October 22. <http://www.psmag.com/books-and-culture/language-prejudices-dont-make-sense-negative-aks-ask-racist-92881> (15 April, 2015).
- Zanuttini, Raffaella. 2015. Don't fear our changing language. *Pacific Standard*. February 17. <http://www.psmag.com/books-and-culture/dont-fear-our-totally-changing-language> (15 April, 2015).