

LINGUISTICS (LING)

*** LING 033a / ENGL 033a, Words, Words, Words: The Structure and History of English Words** Peter Grund

Meggings. Perpendicular. Up. Ain't. Eerily. Bae. The. These are all words in the English language, but, like all words, they have different meanings, functions, and social purposes; indeed, the meaning and function may be different for the same word depending on the context in which we use it (whether spoken or written). In this course, we explore the wonderful world of words. We look at how we create new words (and why), how we change the meaning of words, and how words have been lost (and revived) over time. As we do so, we look at debates over words and their meanings now (such as the feeling by some that *ain't* is not a word at all) and historically (such as the distaste for *subpeditals* for 'shoes' in the sixteenth century), and how words can be manipulated to insult, hurt, and discriminate against others. We look at a wide range of texts by well-known authors (such as Shakespeare) as well as anonymous online bloggers, and we make use of online tools like the Google Ngram viewer and the Corpus of Historical American English to see how words change over time. At the end of the course, I hope you see how we make sophisticated use of words and how studying them opens up new ways for you to understand why other people use words the way they do and how you can use words for various purposes in your own speech and writing. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

*** LING 107a / ER&M 207a, Linguistic Diversity & Endangerment** Claire Bower
 "How many languages are there in the world?" – what does this question even mean? What would a satisfying answer look like? This class comprises a geographical and historical survey of the world's languages and attends to how languages can differ from one another. According to UNESCO, more than half of world languages (virtually all of which are spoken by indigenous communities) will have gone extinct by the end of the century. We interrogate notions like language endangerment, shift and death, and we consider the threats that these pose to global linguistic diversity. There is a striking correlation between the geographic distribution of linguistic and biological diversity, although proportionally, far more languages are endangered than biological species; the question of *how* (and *why?* and *whether?*) to respond to that situation is a matter of serious import for the 21st Century. This course surveys the various ways in which the world's linguistic diversity and language ecologies can be assessed – and discusses the serious threats to that diversity, why this might be a matter of concern, and the principle of linguistic human rights. Students have the opportunity to investigate a minority language in some depth and report on its status with respect to the range of issues discussed in class. SO

*** LING 109b / ENGL 149b, History of the English Language** Peter Grund

The evolution of English from its beginnings nearly 1500 years ago to the language of *Beowulf*, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Jane Austen, Melville, Twain, Langston Hughes, Bernie Sanders, Maya Angelou, and Cardi B. An overview of the 'Englishes' that populate our globe, including a look at the ways that technology affects language.

HU

LING 110a, Language: Introduction to Linguistics Jim Wood

This is a course about language as a window into the human mind and language as glue in human society. Nature, nurture, or both? Linguistics is a science that addresses this puzzle for human language. Language is one of the most complex of human behaviors, but it comes to us without effort. Language is common to all societies and is typically acquired without explicit instruction. Human languages vary within highly specific parameters. The conventions of speech communities exhibit variation and change over time within the confines of universal grammar, part of our biological endowment. The properties of universal grammar are discovered through the careful study of the structures of individual languages and comparison across languages. This course introduces analytical methods that are used to understand this fundamental aspect of human knowledge. In this introductory course students learn about the principles that underly all human languages, and what makes language special. We study language sounds, how words are formed, how humans compute meaning, as well as language in society, language change, and linguistic diversity. SO o Course cr

*** LING 115a / SKRT 110a, Introductory Sanskrit I** Aleksandar Uskokov

An introduction to Sanskrit language and grammar. Focus on learning to read and translate basic Sanskrit sentences in Devanagari script. No prior background in Sanskrit assumed. L1 1½ Course cr

LING 119b, How to Create a Language: Constructed Language and Natural Language
Staff

This course explores how languages get invented, drawing inspiration both from well-known constructed/invented languages like Klingon, Dothraki, and Esperanto, as well as from natural languages. Students learn about the primary linguistic aspects of natural language – Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, and Semantics – and learn how those aspects of grammar are used in various constructed languages. Students, working in small groups, create and describe a new language (or at least a fragment of a new language) over the course of the semester, using the principles learned in class. SO

LING 125b / SKRT 120b, Introductory Sanskrit II Aleksandar Uskokov

Continuation of SKRT 110. Focus on the basics of Sanskrit grammar; readings from classical Sanskrit texts written in Devanagari script. After SKRT 110. L2 1½ Course cr

LING 138a / SKRT 130a, Intermediate Sanskrit I Aleksandar Uskokov

The first half of a two-term sequence aimed at helping students develop the skills necessary to read texts written in Sanskrit. Readings include selections from the *Hitopadesa*, *Kathasaritsagara*, *Mahabharata*, and *Bhagavadgita*. After SKRT 120 or equivalent. L3

*** LING 150a / ENGL 150a, Old English** Emily Thornbury

An introduction to the language, literature, and culture of earliest England. A selection of prose and verse, including riddles, heroic poetry, meditations on loss, a dream vision, and excerpts from *Beowulf*, which are read in the original Old English. HU

*** LING 165a / HEBR 169a / JDST 403a / MMES 162a, Languages in Dialogue:
Hebrew and Arabic** Dina Roginsky

Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Arabic and Hebrew have been in cultural contact in various places and in different aspects. This

advanced Hebrew language class explores linguistic similarities between the two languages as well as cultural comparisons of the communities, built on mutual respect. Students benefit from a section in which they gain a basic exposure to Arabic, based on its linguistic similarity to Hebrew. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140, or placement test, or permission of the instructor. L5, HU RP

* **LING 191a / GMAN 310a, “Sprachkrise” – Philosophies & Language Crises** Sophie Schweiger

The crisis of language predates the invention of ChatGPT (who may or may not have helped write this syllabus). This course delves into the concept of language crises and its long history from a philosophical and literary perspective, examining how crises of language are represented in literature and how they reflect broader philosophical questions about language, identity, and power. We explore different philosophical approaches to language, such as the history of language and philology (Herder, Humboldt, Nietzsche), structuralism and post-structuralism (Saussure), analytical and pragmatic philosophies (Wittgenstein), phenomenology and deconstruction (Heidegger), and analyze how these theories shape our understanding of language while simultaneously evoking its crisis. The course also examines how such language crises are represented and produced in literature and the arts; how authors and artists approach the complexities of language loss, and how crises help birth alternative systems of signification. Through close readings of literary texts by Hofmannsthal, Musil, Bachmann, et. al., we analyze the symbolic and metaphorical significance of language crises, as well as the ethical and political implications of language loss for (cultural) identity. Experimental use of language such as DaDa artwork, performance cultures, and “Sprachspiel” poetry by the “Wiener Gruppe,” as well as contemporary KI/AI literature, further complement the theoretical readings. By exploring language crises through the lens of philosophy and literature, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of language—and its many crises—in shaping our understanding of ourselves and our communities. HU

* **LING 200a, Experimentation in Linguistics** Maria Pinango

Principles and techniques of experimental design and research in linguistics. Linguistic theory as the basis for framing experimental questions. The development of theoretically informed hypotheses, notions of control and confounds, human subject research, statistical analysis, data reporting, and dissemination. Prerequisite: LING 110, 117, 220, CGSC 110, or PSYC 110, or permission of instructor. SO

* **LING 212a, Linguistic Change** Claire Bowern

How languages change, how we study change, and how language relates to other areas of society. This seminar is taught through readings chosen by instructor and students, on topics of interest. Prerequisite: LING 112 or equivalent. WR, SO

LING 217a / EDST 237a / PSYC 317a, Language and Mind Maria Pinango

The structure of linguistic knowledge and how it is used during communication. The principles that guide the acquisition of this system by children learning their first language, by children learning language in unusual circumstances (heritage speakers, sign languages) and adults learning a second language, bilingual speakers. The processing of language in real-time. Psychological traits that impact language learning and language use. SO RP o Course cr

LING 220a / PSYC 318a, Phonetics I Jason Shaw

Each spoken language composes words using a relatively small number of speech sounds, a subset of the much larger set of possible human speech sounds. This course introduces tools to describe the complete set of speech sounds found in the world's spoken languages. It covers the articulatory organs involved in speech production and the acoustic structure of the resulting sounds. Students learn how to transcribe sounds using the International Phonetic Alphabet, including different varieties of English and languages around the world. The course also introduces sociophonetics, how variation in sound patterns can convey social meaning within a community, speech perception, and sound change. SO o Course cr

LING 224a, Mathematics of Language Robert Frank

Study of formal systems that play an important role in the scientific study of language. Exploration of a range of mathematical structures and techniques; demonstrations of their application in theories of grammatical competence and performance including set theory, graphs and discrete structures, algebras, formal language, and automata theory. Evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of existing formal theories of linguistic knowledge. QR, SO o Course cr

*** LING 234a, Quantitative Linguistics** Claire Bowerman

This course introduces statistical methods in linguistics, which are an increasingly integral part of linguistic research. The course provides students with the skills necessary to organize, analyze, and visualize linguistic data using R, and explains the concepts underlying these methods, which set a foundation that positions students to also identify and apply new quantitative methods, beyond the ones covered in this course, in their future projects. Course concepts are framed around existing linguistic research, to help students design future research projects and critically evaluate academic literature. Assignments and in-class activities involve a combination of hands-on practice with quantitative tools and discussion of analyses used in published academic work. The course also include brief overviews of linguistic topics as a foundation for discussing the statistical methods used to investigate them. QR, SO

*** LING 235a, Phonology II** Natalie Weber

Topics in the architecture of a theory of sound structure. Motivations for replacing a system of ordered rules with a system of ranked constraints. Optimality theory: universals, violability, constraint types and their interactions. Interaction of phonology and morphology, as well as the relationship of phonological theory to language acquisition and learnability. Opacity, lexical phonology, and serial versions of optimality theory. Prerequisite: LING 232 or permission of instructor. SO RP

*** LING 236a, Articulatory Phonology** Jason Shaw

Study of experimental methods to record articulatory movements using electromagnetic articulography and/or ultrasound technologies and analytical approaches for relating articulatory movements to phonological structure. Hands-on training in laboratory techniques are paired with discussion of related experimental and theoretical research. Prerequisites: LING 220 and LING 232 or permission of instructor. SO

LING 253a, Syntax I Raffaella Zanuttini

If you knew all the words of a language, would you be able to speak that language? No, because you'd still need to know how to put the words together to form all and only the grammatical sentences of that language. This course focuses on the principles of

our mental grammar that determine how words are put together to form sentences. Some of these principles are shared by all languages, some differ from language to language. The interplay of the principles that are shared and those that are distinct allows us to understand how languages can be very similar and yet also very different at the same time. This course is mainly an introduction to syntactic theory: it introduces the questions that the field asks, the methodology it employs, some of the main generalizations that have been drawn and results that have been achieved. Secondly, this course is also an introduction to scientific theorizing: what it means to construct a scientific theory, how to test it, and how to choose among competing theories. SO
o Course cr

LING 263a, Semantics I Claire Bowers

Introduction to truth-conditional compositional semantics. Set theory, first- and higher-order logic, and the lambda calculus as they relate to the study of natural language meaning. Some attention to analyzing the meanings of tense/aspect markers, adverbs, and modals. QR, SO o Course cr

LING 271a / PHIL 271a, Philosophy of Language Jason Stanley

An introduction to contemporary philosophy of language, organized around four broad topics: meaning, reference, context, and communication. Introduction to the use of logical notation. HU o Course cr

* **LING 324a, Sound Change** Claire Bowers

Topics in the foundations of sound change. Perception, production, and social factors. Seeds of sound change, mechanisms, and means of study. Overview of sound change research, including experimental, computational, simulation, evolutionary, and comparative methods. Prerequisite: LING 112 or permission of instructor. LING 220 and LING 232 are recommended but not required SO

* **LING 385a, Topics in Computational Linguistics: Language Models and Linguistic Theory** Robert Frank

A linguistically-guided exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of large language models (such as GPT-4 and its brethren), which form the foundation of current AI systems. What is the structure of these models and how are they trained? What do they know about language and how can we assess it? To what degree is the existence of these models cause for a re-evaluation of existing theories of linguistic structure? Prerequisites: At least one course covering the foundations of deep learning (CPSC 452, CPSC 477, EENG 439, LING 380, S&DS 265) and at least one course on linguistic theory (LING 232, LING 253, LING 263). SO

* **LING 391a, The Syntax of Coordination** Jim Wood

We discuss the syntax of coordination itself, along with a sample of the myriad constructions that coordination gives rise to, such as across-the-board dependencies, right-node raising, coordinate object drop, conjunction reduction and others. We discuss the special licensing of null arguments in coordinate structures, and whether heads can be coordinated, at or below the word level. Prerequisite: LING 253 Syntax I, or equivalent experience. SO

* **LING 398a, Plurality, Optional Plurality, Pluractionality** Veneeta Dayal

The concept of singularity vs. plurality is arguably universal, yet its morpho-syntactic expression is subject to a great deal of cross-linguistic variation. Many languages have one form for singular reference and another for plural. English, for

example, canonically uses the unmarked form of a noun for singular reference and a plural marked form for plural reference, at least with count nouns: *dog* vs. *dog+s*. In many languages, the base form itself can be used to refer to a plurality but there is nevertheless a form that can be added to ensure plurality. Mandarin, for example, uses the base form itself to refer to singularities as well as pluralities but the addition of the plural marker rules out the possibility of singular reference: *gou* “the dog/the dogs” vs. *gou-men* “the dogs”. Finally, there are languages, such as Cuzco Quechua, in which the verb has a singular and a plural form, such that the singular form refers to a single event while the plural form refers to a plurality of events. In this course we discuss the semantic underpinnings of these three types of plural morphology, plural marking as in English *-s*, optional plurality as in Mandarin *-men*, and pluractionality as in Quechua plural marked verbs. Prerequisite: LING 263/LING 663 or permission of the instructor.
SO

* **LING 490a, Research Methods in Linguistics** Raffaella Zanuttini

Development of skills in linguistics research, writing, and presentation. Choosing a research area, identifying good research questions, developing hypotheses, and presenting ideas clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; methodological issues; the balance between building on existing literature and making a novel contribution. Prepares for the writing of the senior essay.