

Lecture 1

LCD 102: Analyzing Language

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Outline

- 1 Syllabus
- 2 Linguistics
- 3 Language

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1 Syllabus

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Syllabus

- Please review the syllabus at home
- We will only cover highlights in class today
- You are responsible for what is in the syllabus

Course Goals

- This course is an introduction to linguistic analysis, the scientific study of language.
- The purpose of this course is to expose students to structures from a genetically and typologically diverse set of languages, which will encourage students to view language structures as data in a rigorous and scientific way.
- Students will receive a foundation in the core areas of linguistics, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.
- The course will approach language from a scientific perspective, encouraging students to develop critical analysis skills.
- We will explore experimental design, analysis, and presentation of experimental results in the context of investigating linguistic phenomena.

Course Goals

- 1 Refute many popular myths about language
- 2 Understand the difference between natural language systems and writing conventions
- 3 Appreciate language as an orderly, rule-governed natural system
- 4 Use the scientific method to analyze language data
- 5 Recognize and generalize over patterns
- 6 Use the International Phonetic Alphabet to describe speech sounds from unfamiliar languages
- 7 Identify some phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic features of language

Pathways Flexible Common Core Learning Outcomes

All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

Pathways Flexible Common Core Learning Outcomes

A course in the Scientific World area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will:

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the scientific world, including, but not limited to: computer science, history of science, life and physical sciences, linguistics, logic, mathematics, psychology, statistics, and technology-related studies.
- Demonstrate how tools of science, mathematics, technology, or formal analysis can be used to analyze problems and develop solutions.

Pathways Flexible Common Core Learning Outcomes

A course in the Scientific World area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will:

- Articulate and evaluate the empirical evidence supporting a scientific or formal theory.
- Articulate and evaluate the impact of technologies and scientific discoveries on the contemporary world, such as issues of personal privacy, security, or ethical responsibilities.
- Understand the scientific principles underlying matters of policy or public concern in which science plays a role.

Course Materials

- Ohio State University (2011). *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics*. 11th edition. Ohio State University Press. [required]
- other material posted online
- Freeware Programs: \LaTeX

Course Assessment

- 2 Exams: 50%
- Group Presentation: 20%
- Individual Speech 20%
- Attendance & Participation: 10%

Language

- You are encouraged to use any variety of speech in class and on assignments and presentations
- Exams are restricted to:
 - French
 - Spanish
 - Italian
 - Portuguese
 - German
 - English
 - Arabic

Academic Integrity

- Acknowledge whose mind is responsible for what knowledge
- Only responsible for what you “know.” When in doubt, please come and talk to me.

Getting a Good Grade

You can help yourself get a good grade in this class by

- (i) studying the assigned readings carefully and re-reading as needed
- (ii) attending lectures regularly
- (iii) working carefully though the assigned homework and turning it in on-time
- (iv) asking questions when you are unsure
- (v) coming to office hours
- (vi) doing extra credit.

Ask Questions

- I don't know what you do or don't know
- You **MUST** stop me to ask questions
- It is my job to teach you and get you to understand
- Don't assume you and only you are just not getting it
- I will try up to three times to explain something, if you still don't get it, then I will try and prepare a new lecture, or come to office hours
- However, be respectful of your other students. Sometimes it really is just you and you can come to office hours.
- Ultimately it boils down to taking responsibility for your education. Make the class yours.

Sketch of Class Policies

- Be on time
- Participate
- Exams: use some homework and listen to music
- “Subway rules” for food in class and music during exams
- Be honest
- Ask questions

Course Website

- cmadsen.common.gc.cuny.edu/teaching/lcd102
 - Syllabus
 - Lecture slides
 - Assignments

Accomodation

- Please see me about any accommodations needed
 - Larger fonts
 - sans serif fonts
 - colored paper
 - more time on exams
 - Different Color fonts
 - Flashdrive of lecture
- No need to make an “official” request for services
- Accomodation are not special treatment
- It is important that I know so I can help in particular situations

Important Dates

Exams

- 11 Jun: First Exam
- 23 Jun: Second Exam

Important Dates

Presentations

- 10 Jun: Individual Presentation
- 22 Jun: Group Presentation

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Key Concepts in this lecture

- Linguistics
- Language
- Our Framework → Our approach
- Science and the Scientific Method

Freewrite

- What is Linguistics?
- What are linguists concerned with? What do they do?
- How does a linguist study language?

Linguistics is not...

- The study of foreign languages.
- About how to write grammar books.
- About how to teach English to non-native speakers.
- Translation
- Interpretation

What is Linguistics?

The scientific study of language which has a number of subdisciplines

- Phonology: the study of sound/gestures
- Morphology: the study of morphemes (smallest meaningful units) and words
- Syntax: The study of the rules/principles governing the hierarchical relationship between units of meaning
- Semantics: The study of meaning
- Pragmatics: The study of meaning in context

Math, Logic, and Linguistics

- Reduce language to math and logic
- Think of it as a computer program

Egalitarianism

- Modern Linguistics is rather egalitarian
- All languages are equal
- To study one is to study "Language"
- Useful standardization. Akin to Le Système International d'Unités
- International Phonetic Alphabet. Akin to Periodic Table of Elements
- Leipzig Glossing Conventions.

Data Analysis

- Data analysis from grammars, dictionaries, and corpora
- Experimental behavioral data
- Metalinguistic reflection
- Experimental non-behavioral data
- We will be utilizing all of these except non-behavioral data

Sample Problem Sets

- Phonology: Dutch Diminutives, Japanese
- Syntax: Samoan, Tajik
- Morphology: Yaqui, Classical Nahuatl
- Orthography: Japanese Braille

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Language?

- So that naturally leads us to the question of what is language?
- What do you think language is?