

Linguistics Outside of the Classroom: Talks and Experiments

This requirement must be completed by the last day of regularly scheduled classes for the quarter.

Please ask your instructor about deadlines for turning in questionnaires after a talk or experiment. This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade and is required in every section of 201/202.

Q. HOW DO I FULFILL THIS REQUIREMENT?

A. By doing **one** of the following three things:

- Participating in two experiments and completing two experiment questionnaires
- Attending two talks and completing two talk questionnaires
- Attending one talk and participating in one experiment, and completing the appropriate questionnaire for each.

❖ If your schedule makes it impossible to attend a talk or participate in an experiment, ask your instructor **within the first week of class** about an alternative written assignment.

If you attend a linguistics talk, you'll see how linguists present their research to an academic community, and you'll learn about current topics and methods in linguistic research.

If you participate in a linguistics experiment, you'll experience one way that linguists study language, and you'll learn about current research being conducted here at OSU.

Q. HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT TALKS?

A. Frequently check the list posted at <http://ling.ohio-state.edu/courses/201/talks.html> and posted at the 201/202/371 bulletin board across from room 18 in the basement of Oxley Hall. Although there may be other linguistics-related talks during the quarter, only the talks that are posted in these areas can be attended for credit.

Q. HOW DO I SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE IN LINGUISTICS EXPERIMENTS?

A. Visit <http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/research/experiments/> and click on the name of an experiment. To sign up, find the word SIGNUP that lines up with an available time and click on it. Enter your name and contact information and click the SIGNUP box. Remember to write down the time and place for yourself, and be sure to arrive on time. If you arrive even five minutes late, you may have to reschedule.

Q. WHERE DO I GET THE TALK AND EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRES THAT I HAVE TO COMPLETE AND TURN IN TO MY INSTRUCTOR?

A. From a person at the door when you attend a talk, and from the experimenter when you attend an experiment. **If you arrive at a talk late, you must wait until the end to find the person with the forms** (usually just outside the room). **Quietly find a seat, and be sure not to disturb the speaker or the other people attending the talk.** Example questionnaires are attached at the end of this handout.

Q. I'VE NEVER BEEN TO AN ACADEMIC TALK BEFORE. WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

A. Speakers are invited to talk for a full hour, and some speakers talk for longer. **You should only attend a talk if you can stay for the entire lecture.** At the end, a moderator will thank the speaker and invite the audience to stay for a 15-30 minute question and answer period. If you need to leave, the moderator will give you a chance to do so gracefully before the questions start. Speakers are invited guests of the department and the university. Please be considerate of them and the other members of the audience.

Q. WHAT IF I CAN'T MAKE ANY OF THE POSTED EXPERIMENT TIMES?

A. Use the contact information that is posted at the sign-up page to make an appointment with an experimenter. Even weekend and evening hours can be arranged this way.

Q. WHAT IF I SIGN UP FOR AN EXPERIMENT AND THEN HAVE TO CANCEL?

A. E-mail or phone the experimenter to say that you are not coming.

Q. CAN I WAIT UNTIL THE LAST WEEK OF CLASS TO START THIS?

A. Talks and experiments are scheduled throughout the entire quarter, and there is always at least one experiment running. However, because this is a two-part requirement that is required in every section of 201/202, it is impossible for everyone to participate in the last week. Many students find it convenient to complete the first part of their requirement in the first few weeks of the quarter and the second part later on.

Q. WON'T THESE TOPICS BE TOO ADVANCED FOR ME?

A. While some talks are actually geared toward students, don't worry about trying to understand everything that a speaker talks about. Even professors and graduate students attend talks to learn about topics that are completely new to them. Do try to look for the main point or the reasons why a specific piece of linguistic data is being used. Also observe how talks work. Publicly presenting one's work and receiving feedback on that work is an important process in every scientific discipline, and all linguists participate in this process regardless of the sub-field they work in and the research methods they use.

At the end of an experiment, the experimenter will talk with you about what he or she is trying to learn. You'll be given a written explanation that you can take with you, and you'll have the opportunity to ask any questions that you might have. Experimenters understand that you are coming from an introductory level class, and that you might be participating before having learned about syntax, morphology, phonetics, phonology, etc.

Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board

An entity called the Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (SBSIRB) has established guidelines for the ethical treatment of human participants in social and behavioral science research. Here at OSU, the SBSIRB is part of the Office of Responsible Research Practices. All of the experiments that you will be invited to participate in will have been reviewed by the SBSIRB before the sign-up sheets are posted.

Included among the guidelines that ensure the proper treatment of human participants are the following:

- (a) The experience should provide an educational benefit to the participant, and it must be applied equally to a “population.” This second part means that if it is required in one 201/202 section, it must be required in all.
- (b) There must be an equally palatable alternative assignment. For this assignment, students have the option of attending a talk instead of participating in an experiment.
- (c) Students must understand what their rights are as participants in experiments. This means that when you arrive at an experiment, you will be told that you have the right to stop participating in an experiment at any time, without penalty.
- (d) Participants must be given a full explanation of the purpose of the research following their participation. This means that after each experiment, you will be “debriefed.” As soon as you’ve completed an experiment, someone will talk to you and provide you with a written explanation about the experiment. Experimenters are willing to answer any questions that you have about the experiment. Please feel free to ask.

If you have any questions about the Linguistics Outside of the Classroom: Talks and Experiments requirement, you may contact the following people:

Prof. Shari Speer, Department of Linguistics
speer@ling.ohio-state.edu, 292-5389

Office of Responsible Research Practices
292-6950

EXAMPLE OF THE EXPERIMENT PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE AT AN EXPERIMENT. ONLY FORMS THAT ARE OBTAINED AT THE EXPERIMENTS ARE VALID.

Name _____ 201/202 Instructor _____

Date of participation _____

Researcher's name _____ Experiment name _____

Researcher's signature _____

Please answer the following questions in a few sentences:

In your own words, what was the experimenter trying to find out?

Explain one way this experiment relates to what you have been learning in class.

What improvements would you suggest the experimenter make?

EXAMPLE OF THE TALK ATTENDANCE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE AT A TALK. ONLY FORMS THAT ARE RECEIVED AT TALKS ARE VALID.

Name _____ Instructor _____

Date of Talk: _____

Title of Talk: _____

Speaker's Name: _____

Please answer the following questions in a few sentences:

Explain one point from the talk that you thought was interesting:

Explain one way this talk relates to what you have been learning in class.

How would you suggest the speaker improve their talk?