

Linguistics 201
Introduction to Language in the Humanities
2006 Winter

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Text: Georgios Tserdanelis, Wai Yi Peggy Wong (eds):
Language Files, 9th edition (please bring to classes)
Course www: <http://ling.osu.edu/~hana/201/>
Time & Place: Mon, Wed 12:30-2:18 in 129 Mendenhall Lab

1 Readings

Readings are to be read *before* class. Some of the readings will not be covered in class, but homeworks, quizzes and exams will assume that you have read them all. Sometimes I can give you some short additional reading (e.g. an online article), not mentioned in the schedule.

2 Description and objectives of the course

We will attempt to answer questions like the following ones:

- What is Language?
- What is a language?
- Is language unique to humans?
- Why are there so many languages?
- Why is there so much variation even in one language ?
- Is any one language or dialect superior to others?
- What is involved in knowing and using a language?
- How do children learn a language?
- Why is it so hard to avoid having a strong accent in a foreign language?
- How do languages change?

- Can linguistics be used to fight spam?

The course will attempt to do the following things:

- make you more aware of your own beliefs and attitudes concerning language's;
- show you how diverse human languages are, and yet how fundamentally similar they are in many ways;
- acquaint you with a representative sample of most of the fields within the study of language;
- show you some of the techniques used in analysis of language;
- acquaint you with the basic concepts necessary for possible further studies in linguistic.

The examples used in this course will be taken from various languages, although primarily from English. However, the focus of the course is not on any specific language or languages; rather, it is on properties common to all languages and on ways in which languages may differ.

3 Tests, Grading and the like

3.1 Homeworks

On some Wednesdays, a homework will be assigned. It will be due on the following Monday 5 p.m. - you can either print it and give it to me in class or put it into my mailbox or send it to me as e-mail (as PDF, MS Word or plain text). I am not responsible for homeworks that are lost before they reach me. No late homework will be accepted (except extraordinary circumstances).

It is strongly suggested that you work on homeworks in groups of two or three people (write who you worked with at the top of the page). However you have to write it up individually, in your own words. The group is allowed to consult any source except other humans. Each homework will be graded on a scale 0-100%. Incorrect answers are better than no answers. The homework with the lowest grade will be dropped and I calculate the average percentage from the rest.

3.2 Quizzes

There will be several short quizzes. A quiz will cover topics from previous classes and readings (your preparation). You have to work on the quiz on your own and, unless told otherwise, you cannot consult anybody or any book, notes etc. Each quiz will be graded on a scale 0-100%. The quiz with the lowest grade will be dropped, and an average percentage-score will be calculated from the remaining quizzes.

3.3 Paper

A short paper (approximately 3 pages) is due with the final exam. The paper must be typed. The suggested topic is Black English (African American Vernacular English) – its grammar, history and place in the American society. You will be required to integrate

information from several serious sources. However, you will also have to add your opinion about the sociological/political issues connected with BE. I will not grade your opinions but the way you can support them. You are required to turn in an outline of the paper and a list of sources by the 6th week and a preliminary draft by the 8th week of class. Exact details will be given to you by the end of the 3rd week. If you strongly prefer some other topic, discuss it with me by the end of the 3rd week.

3.4 Exams

There will be a midterm and a final exam. Both exams will be cumulative; midterm will be in-class, final will be take-home. You have to work on the exams on your own.

3.5 Linguistics outside of the classroom

Information concerning this requirement can be viewed at <http://ling.osu.edu/courses/outside.html>.

Overall, you must do one of the following:

- participate in two linguistic experiments or
- attend two talks or
- participate in one experiment and attend one talk

You must complete a questionnaire for each experiment/talk and submit them to me as soon as possible but not later than the last day of regularly scheduled classes for the quarter. If your schedule makes it impossible to fulfill the requirements, you may be eligible for an alternative written assignment, if you talk to me by the end of the second week.

3.6 Active class participation

“Active participation” refers to your comments and questions during class, your answers to my questions, etc. I do not keep track of whether your answers, etc. are correct, but simply whether or not you participate. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get reliable notes from a fellow student. Do not ask me what any missed lecture was about. Lectures won’t be repeated for anyone.

3.7 Grading

Homeworks	0-150
Quizzes	0-100
Midterm	0-200
Final	0-200
Paper	0-200
Linguistics outside of the classroom	0-50
Active class participation	0-100
Total:	0-1000

		B+	899-870	C+	799-770	D+	699-670
A	1000-930	B	869-830	C	769-730	D	600-669
A-	929-900	B-	829-800	C-	729-700	E	599-0

Imagine you get the following percentages from quizzes: 90, 50, 80, 100. I drop the lowest one (50), calculate the average from the rest (90%) and you get 90 points for quizzes (90% of 100).

3.8 Make-up policy

If there are extraordinary circumstances and you have to miss a quiz/exam, contact me by e-mail. Retakes will be scheduled within one week after the original quiz/exam and will be oral.

4 Special accommodation needs

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to discuss their specific needs. In coordination with Office for Disability Services I will be more than willing to help.

5 Tentative Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Files
1	M 03-27 W 03-29	Course overview and organization Introduction	1
2	M 04-03 W 04-05	Animal communication Pragmatics – Language and Context	2 8 (skip 8.2,8.6)
3	M 04-10 W 04-12	Semantics – Language and Meaning Syntax – Sentence structure	7 (skip 7.4), 15.3 6.1, 6.2, 6.4.1
4	M 04-17 W 04-19	Syntax Syntax	6.3-6.6 (may skip 6.5)
5	M 04-24 W 04-26	Phonetics - Language sounds Midterm	3.1-3.6
6	M 05-01 W 05-03	Phonetics Phonology – Sound patterns	3.7-3.10 4
7	M 05-08 W 05-10	Morphology – Word structure Language Change	5 11.1, 12 (skip 12.2)
8	M 05-15 W 05-17	Lang. Variation Lang. Variation/Prescriptivism	10
9	M 05-22 W 05-24	Language and Mind Language and Computers	9 14
10	M 05-29 W 05-31	Memorial Day Other topics & Summary	11.5