Ling 100a: Introduction to Linguistics  
Fall 2018

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TA office hours: TBD

Course time and location: MWTh 12-12:50pm, Location TBD

1 Description

This course introduces students to the scientific study of human language and the language faculty (commonly referred to as "theoretical linguistics").

The study of linguistics is typically broken up into four basic sub-areas, and introducing each of these will form the bulk of the course's content: the study of sound traits and sound patterns (phonetics and phonology), of word structures (morphology), of sentence structures (syntax), and of meaning and its use in context (semantics and pragmatics). In this course, each of the basic sub-areas will be approached largely from a synchronic perspective, comparing the traits present in a broad range of languages currently spoken around the world.

We will also touch on several other important areas of linguistics, including language change, language acquisition, and sociolinguistics, and certain areas in which linguistics interfaces with other disciplines (including, e.g., computational linguistics).

2 Learning goals

By the end of the course, students will:

1. develop a general familiarity with the basic components of linguistic knowledge across languages and the modern generative approach to analyzing grammar. This will include a basic knowledge of:
   1.1. how sound patterns work
   1.2. the structure of words, phrases, and sentences
   1.3. how lexical, compositional, and/or contextual meaning arises in language

2. gain a strong understanding of the descriptive (and not prescriptive) approach used in the field of linguistics;
3. learn the basic articulatory traits of the sounds found in the world's spoken languages, and to use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to read transcriptions of English and other languages and create transcriptions of English;

4. learn to apply their knowledge to analyze data from the languages of the world.

3 Prerequisites

This course has no prerequisites and assumes no prior knowledge of linguistics.

4 Readings

Our textbook will be *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics*, 12th edition, by the Department of Linguistics of The Ohio State University. A copy of the textbook is on reserve in the library.

Additional recommended and required readings will be made available on the course LATTE site from time to time.

5 LATTE

Please check the course LATTE site frequently. The course schedule, additional/supplemental readings, assignments, and other materials will be posted on the site as we progress through the semester.

6 Requirements and grading

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<td>Homework assignments</td>
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<td>Participation and attendance</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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6.1 Assignments

There will be approximately 8 homework assignments during the semester. Assignments will typically be assigned on Thursdays and due at the beginning of class on the following Wednesday. Unless otherwise stated for a particular assignment, all homework must be typed and submitted in hard copy; due to the many issues that can occur with fonts, assignments may not be submitted by email.

Late homework will be accepted only for 2 days after an assignment's due date, *provided that* one point will be deducted for each day the assignment is late, up to a maximum of 2 points off. Please note that homework submitted on the date it is due but after the beginning of class will be deemed one day late. As an illustration, if an assignment due on a Tuesday is submitted on by midnight on Wednesday, the assignment would be accepted but 1 point would be deducted from the grade for the assignment.

Although I strongly encourage you to work on each of the assignments independently, unless an assignment otherwise provides, if you find yourself having difficulty with an assignment you may discuss
the assignment with one other person, \textit{provided that} (i) in your assignment you must identify the person that you worked with and (ii) each student must write up the assignment independently and separately.

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

6.2 Participation and attendance

Class attendance is required and preparedness for and participation in class is expected. Please come to class each day on time and prepared to engage with the assigned material.

You may miss up to three classes for any reason. Each additional class missed will result in a reduction of your final percentage grade for the course, up to a maximum of 5% lost. Please note that use of an electronic device in class without prior permission will negatively affect your participation and attendance grade.

6.3 Quizzes and exams

There will be a short quiz every 2-3 weeks, along with a longer midterm quiz, which will count as two quizzes; all of the quizzes together will comprise 35% of your final grade. The final exam will take place at the date and time scheduled by the Registrar. I will provide more details on each as the dates approach.

7 Electronic devices

No electronic devices (including laptops, tablets, and cellphones) may be used in class without my prior permission. Please keep all cellphones put away (and turn them off completely if the thought of a new message is irresistible). Please note that use of an electronic device in class without prior permission will negatively affect your participation and attendance grade.

8 Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

9 Academic integrity

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Research Guides - Citing Sources.
10 Topics and general schedule

The topics that will be covered in the course, important readings in the textbook, and general schedule are as follows (subject to minor change based on class progress and interests):

**Week 1: Introduction to the course**

- Language Files (LF) ch 1: Introduction
  - LF 1.1-1.3 (1.4 & 1.5 optional)
    - LF 1.1: Introducing the Study of Language
    - LF 1.2: What You Know When You Know a Language
    - LF 1.3: Other (Non-Essential) Aspects of Knowing a Language

**Week 2 - 3: Phonetics**

- **Mon., Sept. 3 - No class (Labor Day)**
- **Thurs., Sept. 6 - Brandeis Monday**
- LF ch. 2: Phonetics
  - LF 2.1-2.3 (2.4 & 2.5 optional)
    - LF 2.1: Representing Speech Sounds
    - LF 2.2: Articulation: English Consonants
    - LF 2.3: Articulation: English Vowels
- **Mon., Sept. 10 - No class (Rosh Hashanah)**
- **Wed., Sept. 19 - No class (Yom Kippur)**
- **Mon., Sept. 24 - No class (Sukkot)**
- **Tues., Sept. 25 - Brandeis Monday**
- **Mon., Oct. 1 - No class (Shmini Atzeret)**
- **Quiz** (tentatively sched. for Wed., Oct. 3)

**Weeks 4-7: Phonology**

- LF ch. 3: Phonology
  - LF 3.2, 3.3, 3.5 (3.1 & 3.4 optional)
    - LF 3.2: Phonemes and Allophones
    - LF 3.3: Phonological Rules
    - LF 3.5: How to Solve Phonology Problems
- **Quiz** (tentatively sched. for Thurs., Oct. 25)

**Week 8-9: Morphology, Midterm**

- LF ch. 4: Morphology
  - LF 4.1 - 4.5
    - LF 4.2: Morphological Process
    - LF 4.3: Morphological Types of Languages
    - LF 4.4: The Hierarchical Structure of Derived Words
    - LF 4.5: Morphological Analysis
- **Midterm** (tentatively sched. for Wed., Nov. 7)

**Weeks 10-12: Syntax**

- LF ch. 5: Syntax  
  LF 5.1, 5.3 - 5.5 (5.2 optional)  
  LF 5.1: Basic Ideas of Syntax  
  LF 5.3: Syntactic Constituency  
  LF 5.4: Syntactic Categories  
  LF 5.5: Constructing a Grammar

- **Quiz** (tentatively sched. for Mon., Nov. 19)

- Thanksgiving recess Nov. 21-23

**Weeks 13-14: Semantics and Pragmatics**

- LF ch. 6: Semantics, ch. 7: Pragmatics  
  LF 6.1-6.4, 7.2, 7.5  
  LF 6.1: An Overview of Semantics  
  LF 6.2: Lexical Semantics: The Meaning of Words  
  LF 6.3: Compositional Semantics: The Meaning of Sentences  
  LF 6.4: Compositional Semantics: Putting Meanings Together  
  LF 7.2: Rules of Conversation  
  LF 7.5: Presupposition

**Final exam on date and time scheduled by Registrar**