Course Description
What do we know when we know how to talk? Normally, using language is an unconscious activity like walking or chewing gum. This course examines the ways in which the analysis of language reveals a speaker’s unconscious knowledge, serving as a “window on the mind.” We will look at data from language use, language learning, and language change in order to discover the underlying principles of language: structures of words (morphology), sounds (phonology), sentences (syntax), and meaning (semantics), as well as their use in context (sociolinguistics) and representation in the mind (psycholinguistics). We will collect, examine, and analyze data from English and a wide variety of other languages.

By the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- Understand and use the concepts of morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse
- Know fundamental approaches to understanding language, language acquisition, and bilingualism
- Conduct basic linguistic analysis
- Apply linguistic concepts in their second/foreign language teaching

This is an introductory graduate course. Undergraduate students in junior and senior standing can take this course and should be prepared to complete graduate-level work.

There is a Blackboard (BB) site for this course. Please be sure you are logged on to this site by Monday, January 14 at the latest. If you have trouble logging on, please contact the university Office of Information Technology (202-885-2550 or help@american.edu).

Course Texts

Required:


Additional readings available on Blackboard (BB)

Recommended:


Reference Materials:

Dictionaries:

Encyclopedias:

NOTE: The 2006 edition is available online at
Course Requirements

- Students are expected to come to class prepared and carry out discussions substantiated by course material covered.
- Reading assignments should be completed by the class date for which they are listed. While the examinations will focus on the readings in Fromkin et al., the readings in Crystal will prove very useful for deepening your understanding and enriching any essay questions.
- Homework assignments from Fromkin et al. should be written out and brought to class on the date assignment is listed. We will review selected problems in class. Problems not assigned make good practice exercises and might appear on exams. Homework assignments will be collected at the end of each class.
- Reference materials: Make liberal use of the glossary in the back of Fromkin et al. and of reference dictionaries and encyclopedias in the P29 call number area of the AU Library Reference collection. Some particularly useful titles are listed under course texts.

Course Policies

Attendance and participation are required and considered in your grade. All homework assignments must be submitted on time; late work submitted by the end of the week of class receives a grade reduction of 10%. After that, late work is not accepted unless there are extraordinary circumstances. All course work is subject to the standards and procedures of the University Academic Integrity Code. All work must be one’s own unless appropriate collaboration has been approved in advance.

Please be sure that you are receiving email from your AU email address.

Grading

- Regular attendance and participation – 10%
- Homework – 15%
- Two language journals – 15%
- Discussion facilitation – 15%
- Three exams – 25%
- Final project – 20%

Course Overview:

1. Jan 15 What is Language? Video: "Colorless Green Ideas"
2. Jan 22 Brain and Language
3. Jan 29 Morphology
4. Feb 5 Syntax; JOURNAL I due; form groups for Linguistics-in-Context Project
5. Feb 12 Syntax (cont.); Review for Exam I
6. Feb 19 EXAM I; Linguistics-in-Context Project Discussion
7. Feb 26 Semantics
8. Mar 5 Phonetics; Linguistics-in-Context Project Proposals due
9. Mar 12 NO CLASS – Spring Break
10. Mar 19 Instructor at a conference. Exam II: Take-home; Linguistics-in-Context Project group work
11. Mar 26 Phonology
12. April 2 Language Acquisition; JOURNAL II due
13. Apr 9 Language in Society
14. Apr 16 Language Change; Review for Exam III
15. Apr 23 EXAM III

**Friday, April 26** –LINGUISTICS-IN-CONTEXT PROJECTS due by 12:00pm

16. April 30 NO CLASS – Study Day
17. May 7 Linguistics-in-Context Project Presentations
Course Assignments

Class attendance and participation, assigned readings and films, homework assignments, facilitation of an in-class discussion, two in-class exams and one take-home exam, two language journals, and a final project.

Facilitation of an In-class Discussion
We will have six in-class discussions of assigned research and news articles and films lead by students in groups of two or three. Each discussion will last 30-45 minutes. The goal of the discussions is to explore how linguistic concepts and material presented in Fromkin et al. (2006) and Crystal (2010) are connected to language teaching and research and real-life situations.

To facilitate a discussion, facilitators will develop a list of 5-10 discussion questions and will post them on BB under discussions by 5pm on Thursday before the discussion in class. For the first discussion on January 22, the questions should be posted by 5pm on Sunday, January 20. Discussion facilitators will also develop an interactive in-class activity that will allow the class to engage with the readings, films, and facilitators’ questions in a meaningful and productive way. Students in class are expected to go over the posted questions before class and be prepared to discuss the questions and the readings.

Language Journal
The goals of this Language Journal is (1) to increase your awareness of the structures and functions of language (its uses, misuses, subtleties, variants, etc.); (2) to make use of tools learned in this course to analyze what you observe; and (3) to begin to apply what you are learning in this course to any second/foreign language teaching experiences.

Journal I (10 points)
- Three (3) individual examples of language issues you find to be of interest
- Put each entry on a separate page, first presenting the issue and then explaining why it is interesting linguistically
- Draw upon the texts by Fromkin et al, Crystal, and additional course readings to construct your linguistic explanations. Please make clear references to the texts and cite page numbers where appropriate
- Take your items from a variety of venues, and please avoid hackneyed examples

Journal II (10 points)
Identify one (1) aspect of English morphology, syntax, semantics, or phonology that you think is especially challenging for English language learners. Reflecting upon your reading in Fromkin et al., Crystal, and other course materials to explain why, linguistically, this construction might be so difficult to learn. Use examples to illustrate your points. If you are presently teaching ESL/EFL (or have taught in the past), I encourage you to draw upon your personal experience.

Format:
Each journal submission should be typed, double spaced, 12 point type, and 2-3 pages long. Please number your pages in the upper right-hand corner. Use APA format of academic writing.

Writing Style:
This is a polished piece of formal writing. Humor and nuance are welcome, but clarity, grammatical precision, and correct spelling are necessary components. So are stapled pages!
Team Linguistics-in-Context Project

The goals of this project are to (1) apply your new linguistic knowledge to real-world language issues; (2) gain experience in gathering primary linguistic data; and (3) gain experience in analyzing and presenting empirical linguistic data.

To complete this project, you will work in groups of 2-4. You will select your own research topic, conduct a literature review, develop clear research questions, and will collect and analyze primary data. You will need to work with your team outside of class, especially for data collection and analysis.

On March 5, each group will submit a project proposal that includes a tentative topic of the project, a goal of the project and a brief rationale, research question(s), and a list of at least 10 references. The list of references should be more extensive when the project is complete. The proposal should also list the names of group members.

On May 7, each group will make a 15-minute presentation of its project to the class (10 min to present + 5 min to answer questions). For your presentation, please prepare a PowerPoint and e-mail it to me by 4:30pm on the day of the presentation.

Project Format:

Your report will have the following sections:

- Introduction
- Statement of Problem: literature-grounded and includes a research question
- Research Design
- Data Analysis
- Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

The report should be typed, 12 point type font, double spaced, and pages numbered in the upper right-hand corner. Use APA format of academic writing. Reports should be no longer than a total of seven (7) pages. (NOTE: Actual data sheets may be included in an Appendix, if desired.)

Point Value:
The project is worth a maximum of 20 points (15 points for the paper; 5 points for the presentation). Since you will be working in teams, all members of the group will receive the same grade unless you wish to be graded on your individual contribution. (If so, please speak with me in advance.) You will also be asked to evaluate (anonymously, if you wish) the contributions of all members of your group to the project (including yourself).

Project Time-Line:

Form Groups
Discuss Research Projects in Class,
Introduction to Experimental Design
Submit a Project Proposal
(topic, goal, rationale, research question(s), list of references, and group members)
Linguistics-in-Context Project group work
Submission of Written Papers
Presentations in Class

Tuesday, February 5
Tuesday, February 19
Tuesday, March 5
Tuesday, March 19
Friday, April 26 by 12:00pm
Tuesday, May 7
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 15</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“How I got into linguistics, and what I got out of it” by William Labov, online at <a href="http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~wlabov/HowIgot.html">http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~wlabov/HowIgot.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>TOPIC: Brain and Language</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article discussion and teaching implications</td>
<td>CD Part I: Ch. 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part VIII: Ch. 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Part XI: Ch. 64, 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treffert &amp; Christensen (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“A Thief that Robs the Brain of Language” (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 2: 2, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>TOPIC: Morphology</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD Part III: Ch. 13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 3: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BB Discussion “Final Project” is open for brainstorming topics and ideas for the final project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>TOPIC: Syntax</td>
<td>JOURNAL SUBMISSION I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 4: Syntax (pp. 115-150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD Part III: Ch. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 4: 3, 6, 7, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>TOPIC: Syntax (cont.) Review for Exam I</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 4: Syntax (pp. 150-163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article discussion and teaching implications</td>
<td>BB: Bauer (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grant Brown (1971)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 4: 18, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>EXAM I (Covers Fromkin et al., Chapters 1-4; video; class discussion)</td>
<td>REVIEW FOR EXAM I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DISCUSSION: Linguistics-in-Context Project Introduction to Experimental Design</td>
<td>Prepare to discuss Linguistics-in-Context Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>TOPIC: Semantics – The Meaning of Language</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article discussion and teaching implications</td>
<td>CD Part III: Ch. 17-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BB: Cohen (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marsden &amp; Chen (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zyzik (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch. 5: 6, 8, 13, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 5</td>
<td>TOPIC: Phonetics</td>
<td>FRH Ch. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linguistics-in-Context Project Proposals due</td>
<td>CD Part IV: Ch. 22-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FRH Ch 6: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Linguistics-in-Context Project Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS – Spring Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mar 19 | Instructor at a conference                                               | EXAM II – Take-home (Covers Fromkin et al., Chapters 5-6; class discussion)  
Instructor at a conference  
Students work outside of class and should use class time productively to complete a take-home exam and make significant progress on their Linguistics-in-Context projects  
Linguistics-in-Context Project group work  |
| Mar 26 | **TOPIC: Phonology**                                                     | FRH Ch. 7  
CD: Part IV: Ch. 28, 29, 30  
BB: McDonald, Yule, & Powers (1994)  
Picard (2007)  
Smith (2011)  
VIDEO: "American Tongues" (DVD 2771)  
**Assignments:**  
FRH Ch 7: 3, 6, 9, 11  |
| April 2 | **TOPICS: Language Acquisition**                                         | JOURNAL SUBMISSION II  
FRH Ch. 8  
BB: "The Bilingual Advantage" (2010)  
"Why Bilinguals are Smarter" (2012)  
**Assignments:**  
FRH Ch. 8: 2, 6, 9  |
| Apr 9  | **TOPICS: Language in Society**                                          | FRH Ch. 10  
CD Part II: Ch. 6 - 11  
VIDEO: "She Said, He Said" (VHS 2802 or DVD 9456)  
**Assignments:**  
FRH Ch. 10: 1, 5, 6  |
| Apr 16 | **TOPIC: Language Change**                                               | FRH Ch. 11.  
CD Part IX: 47 - 55  
BB: LaFond & Aktuna (2009)  
VIDEO: "In Search of the First Language" (VHS 3090 or DVD 9469)  
**Assignments:**  
FRH Ch. 11: 1, 2, 6, 11  |
| Apr 23 | **EXAM III**                                                             | REVIEW FOR EXAM III  |
|        | **Friday, April 26 - Linguistics-in-Context Projects due by 12:00 pm**    |                                                                        |
| April 30 | No Class - Study Day                                                     |                                                                        |
| May 7  | Presentations: Linguistics-in-Context Project                           |                                                                        |