

Linguistic Science

ENGL 3371 (Spring 2016)
Texas Tech University

Instructor: Dr. Aaron Braver
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Office: English & Philosophy Building, Room 312C

Class Meetings: M/W, 4:00pm–5:20pm, English & Philosophy Building, Room 450

Office Hours: M/W, 3:00pm–3:50pm
Be sure to reserve a slot: <http://www.aaronbraver.com/officehours>

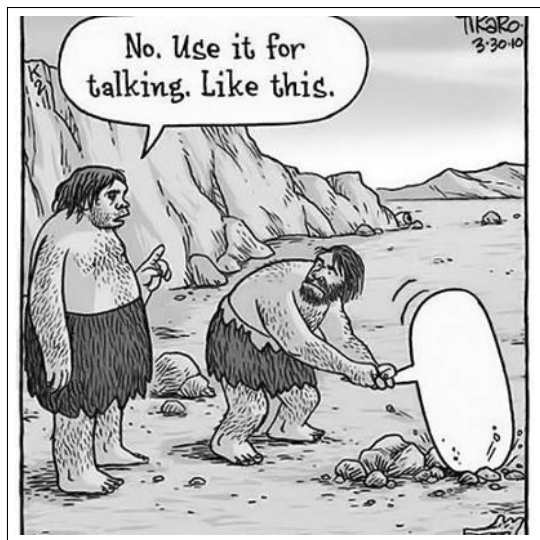
Course website: On Blackboard (<http://ttu.blackboard.edu>)

About this course

Human languages are complicated and diverse—but also highly systematic. This course provides a basic introduction to these systematic, structural properties of human language, as illuminated by modern linguistic theory. We will examine the methods employed by linguists, as well as some of the key results from this work. We will also consider some of the social, philosophical, and cognitive aspects of human language.

By the end of this course, you should be able to...

- Explain the properties that make human language unique
- Find patterns and regularities in linguistic data
- Infer from these patterns what kind of knowledge all language-speakers must share
- Understand the basics of linguistic theory and how this theory explains the fundamental properties of human language



This course is *not* about 'proper' grammar or how to learn hundreds of languages (in fact, we'll see that *linguistics* is not about these things at all).

Materials

Required Course Textbook

Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics, 11th Edition. Ohio State University Press. ISBN: 081425179X.

- Please be sure to get the *11th* edition (it has a big '11' in the top right corner). Other editions will *not* be usable for this course.

Handouts

Handouts for each unit will be posted on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to bring the appropriate handouts with you to every class meeting, either in digital or dead tree format.

Assignments and Grading

Homework

There will be approximately one homework assignment per unit.

Work must be typed and submitted as a PDF via the course Blackboard site (too many linguistic fonts go wrong in Word documents).

Collaboration is permitted on homework assignments under the following conditions:

Each person must write up and hand in their own assignment.

Any answers, explanations, or reasoning in the assignment must be written in *your own words*.

If you and another person hand in nearly identical assignments (as judged by me), I reserve the right to require you to work alone from then on.

You must clearly indicate at the top of the assignment who you collaborated with.

A guiding principle: You must always do your own work—this means that you must state things in your own words and show that you understand any ideas that you got from another source.

In-class exercises

We will occasionally have in-class exercises and problem sets. These cannot be made up if you are absent.

Exams

We will have a a midterm and a final exam, both take-home. The midterm is due on Wednesday, 4/6, at 11:59pm. The final is due on Saturday 5/14 at 11:59pm.

Grade breakdown

Category	Percent	Numerical score	Letter grade
Homework	50%	95–100%	A+
In-class assignments	10%	90–94.99%	A
Take-home midterm	20%	85–89.99%	B+
Take-home final	20%	80–84.99%	B
		75–79.99%	C+
		70–74.99%	C
		65–69.99%	D+
		60–64.99%	D
		>60%	F

Policies and expectations

Attendance and punctuality

You are expected to come to (every) class and to participate fully in class discussions and exercises. Please make an effort to arrive on time. (Repeat tardiness may be counted as an absence.)

If you know you will be absent, *email me ahead of time*. If the absence is documented and justifiable, it *may* be excused (at the discretion of the instructor).

After 5 unexcused absences, you will automatically receive an F for the course.

University policy (OP 34.19) requires that no penalty be imposed upon students who are absent from class because of religious observances, and allows for students to make up the work missed because of such absence. To exercise this right, *students must inform the instructor in writing prior to the absence*.

Late work

Assignments must be submitted on time—this is at the start of class, unless otherwise specified. *Assignments turned in after the deadline will receive zero points*. There is no partial credit for late work.

This course has a one-time no-questions-asked pass on this policy applicable only to homework assignments (and not to in-class assignments or exams). To use it, you must email the instructor *before* the original deadline, and turn in the assignment no later than one class meeting after the original deadline.

Extraordinary circumstances

Life is complicated—illnesses and injuries happen. If these or other life events are interfering with your ability to meet course requirements, please *let me know as soon as possible*.

Email

Some course-related announcements will be made over email. These messages will be sent to your TTU address, which you should check at least daily. Failure to check your TTU email will not excuse you from any requirements assigned via email.

Please include the course number in the subject line of any emails you send me (as well as an actual subject). If you are sending from an account other than your TTU address, please include your full name in the message body.

Civility in the classroom and electronic devices

Students are expected to maintain a polite, civil environment that is conducive to learning for everyone. This includes refraining from non-approved uses of electronic devices, or use of such devices that becomes distracting for other students. Breaches of decorum may result in expulsion from the classroom or consequences for your final grade.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements, should contact the instructor as soon possible to make the necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact the Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or call (806) 742-2405.

Note that it is your responsibility to provide your instructor with a Letter of Accomodation (LOA) within the first week of class, or within one week of receiving the LOA, so please bring me your LOA as soon as possible. Further, the LOA becomes effective only after it is signed by the instructor, and is *not* retroactive.

Academic integrity

Cheating and plagiarism will be treated very seriously. As a general policy, all such cases will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct with a recommendation for the fullest sanctions, as well as automatic failure for the course. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with TTU's statement on academic integrity, which is available at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentconduct/academicinteg.php>, and related policies in the Student Handbook (especially in Part II, Section B, Subsection 1), which is available at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/handbook/>.

You are encouraged to form study groups outside of class to help you understand the course material and discuss readings. You may collaborate on homework assignments only as described above.

If you have any questions, please consult the instructor, a dean, or the University's academic integrity policy.

Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Please pay attention for announcements in class and via email.

Introduction

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Reading/Assignments</u>
M 1/25	Syllabus What is linguistics? What do you already know?	
W 1/27	Design features of language	·LF 1.0–1.5
M 2/1	Modality Animal communication	·LF 17.0–17.2 ·LF 17.4–17.6 ·LF 14.0–14.3

Phonetics

W 2/3	What is phonetics? The vocal tract	·LF 2.0–2.1
M 2/8	Consonants of English Vowels of English	·HW 1 (Introduction) due ·LF 2.2–2.3
W 2/10	Sounds not in English Suprasegmental features	·LF 2.4–2.5

M	2/15	Acoustic phonetics Transcription	·LF 2.6
W	2/17	Special topic TBD	·HW 2 (Phonetics) due
M	2/22	No class	

Phonology

W	2/24	What is phonology? Phonotactic constraints Phonemes and allophones	·LF 3.0–3.2
M	2/29	Phonemes and allophones (cont'd) Phonological rules and processes	·LF 3.3
W	3/2	Phonological rules and processes (cont'd) Syllables	
M	3/7	Tackling phonological puzzles	·LF 3.5
W	3/9	Special topic TBD	
M	3/14	Spring break	
W	3/16	Spring break	

Morphology

M	3/21	What is morphology? How do words work? Morphemes	·HW 3 (Phonology) due ·LF 4.0–4.1
W	3/23	Morphological processes	·LF 4.2

M	3/28	No class	
W	3/30	Morphological systems Hierarchical structure of words	·LF 4.3–4.5 ·Turn in HW 4 (Morphology) by Friday (4/1) to receive comments before midterm
M	4/4	Special topic TBD Midterm review	· HW 4 (Morphology) due · Midterm exam handed out

Syntax

W	4/6	What is syntax? The basics Syntactic properties	· Midterm exam due ·LF 5.0–5.1
M	4/11	Syntactic properties (cont'd) Constituency Syntactic categories	·LF 5.2–5.4
W	4/13	Building phrases	·LF 5.5
M	4/18	Building phrases (cont'd) Ambiguity	
W	4/20	Special topic TBD	

Semantics

M	4/25	What is semantics? Lexical semantics The truth	· HW 5 (Syntax) due ·LF 6.0–6.3
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W 4/27 Compositional semantics ·LF 6.4
Assertion and presupposition
Scope relations

Language and culture

M 5/2 What is language and culture? ·HW 6 (Semantics) due
Linguistic anthropology ·LF 11.0–11.2
Language and thought

W 5/4 Language and power ·LF 11.3–11.4
Politeness

M 5/9 Special topic TBD ·HW 7 (Language and culture) due
Final exam review ·Final exam handed out

Sat 5/14 ·Final exam due at 11:59pm
