Principles of Language

ENGL 5335 (Fall 2014)

Texas Tech University

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Office: English & Philosophy Building, Room 312C

Class Meetings: T/Th, 11:00am–12:20pm, English & Philosophy Building, Room 202

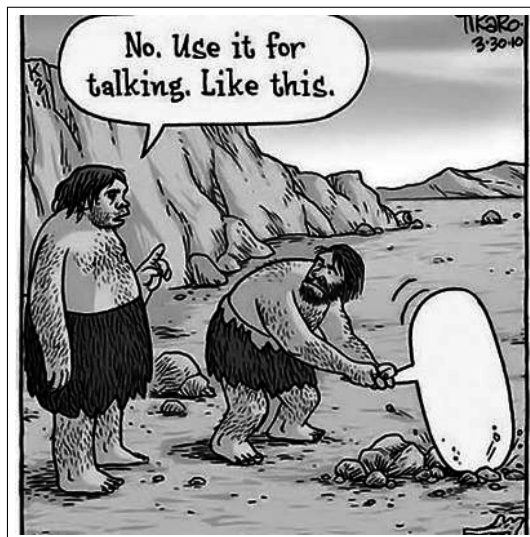**Office Hours:**   T/Th, 1:00pm–1:50pm (and by appointment)

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 speakers of any language must have in order to produce and perceive speech sounds and to construct and comprehend words and sentences

- Understand the basics of linguistic theory and how this theory explains the basic 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).

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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.

Other Materials

All other materials will be made available on the course Blackboard site. Please contact me immediately if you do not have access to the site.

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). If necessary, you may draw diagrams by hand and scan them into your document.

Collaboration is permitted on homework assignments under the following conditions:

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

Any 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 assignments

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

Grade breakdown

Category	Percent
Homework	70%
In-class assignments	20%
Participation	10%

Numerical score	Letter grade
95–100%	A+
90–94.99%	A
85–89.99%	B+
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. If you know you will be absent, *email me ahead of time* so we can ensure you stay caught up.

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.

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

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. Breaches of decorum may result in expulsion from the classroom or consequences for final grades.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity will be policed vigorously in this course. Please familiarize yourself with TTU's policy on academic integrity, which can be found in the *Student Handbook & Code of Conduct*, §II.B, X.B3 (`http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/handbook/`), and the University's Operating Policies & Procedures §34.12.3 (`http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP34.12.pdf`).

Some broad outlines of the University policy:

- *The attempt of students to present as their own any work not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.* (OP §34.12.3)

- "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to: copying from another student; using unauthorized materials during an exam; using, buying, or transporting test keys or homework solutions; collaborating on assignments without authority to do so; falsifying data.

- "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: presenting others' work as one's own academic work; failure to appropriately give credit to quotes or ideas taken from other sources including books, magazines, Internet sources, and scholarly works.

You may work in groups on the homework assignments in this course only as outlined in the 'Homework' section above. Any other collaboration may result in disciplinary action.

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

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 Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or call (806) 742-2405.

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. The LOA becomes effective only after it is signed by the instructor, and is not retroactive.

Suggestions and complaints

I welcome suggestions and complaints at any time. The sooner an issue is brought to my attention, the sooner it can be remedied. You may provide anonymous feedback at any time via the course Blackboard site.

How to succeed in this class

- Show up to class

- Make a contribution in every class meeting

- Turn in homework on time—it's worth quite a bit of your grade!

- Get help before you fall behind

- Avoid academic dishonesty

Schedule

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

$\mathbb{H}$ HW due $\qquad$ $\mathbb{R}$ Reading due

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Introduction

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T	8/26	Syllabus What is linguistics? What do you already know?		
R	8/28	Design features of language	·LF 1.0–1.5	$\mathbb{R}$

T	9/2	Modality Animal communication	·LF 17.0–17.2, 17.4–17.6, 14.0–14.3	$\mathbb{R}$

Phonetics

R	9/4	What is phonetics The vocal tract	·LF LF 2.0–2.1	$\mathbb{R}$
T	9/9	Consonants of English Vowels of English	·HW 1 (Introduction) due	$\mathbb{H}$
			·LF 2.2–2.3	$\mathbb{R}$
R	9/11	Sounds not in English Suprasegmental features	·LF 2.4–2.5	$\mathbb{R}$
T	9/16	Acoustic phonetics Transcription	·LF 2.6	$\mathbb{R}$
R	9/18	No Class		
T	9/23	Special topic TBD	·HW 2 (Phonetics) due	$\mathbb{H}$

Phonology

R	9/25	What is phonology? Phonotactic constraints Phonemes and allophones	·LF 3.0–3.2	$\mathbb{R}$
T	9/30	Phonemes and allophones Phonological rules and processes	·LF 3.3	$\mathbb{R}$
R	10/2	Phonological rules and processes Syllables		
T	10/7	Tackling phonological puzzles	·LF 3.5	$\mathbb{R}$

R	10/9	Special topic TBD		

Morphology

T	10/14	What is morphology? How do words work? Morphemes	·HW 3 (Phonology) due ·LF 4.0–4.1	$\mathbb{H}$ $\mathbb{R}$
R	10/16	Morphological processes	·LF 4.2	$\mathbb{R}$
T	10/21	Morphological systems Hierarchical structure of words	·LF 4.3–4.5	$\mathbb{R}$
R	10/23	Special topic TBD		

Syntax

T	10/28	What is syntax The basics Syntactic properties	·HW 4 (Morphology) due ·LF 5.0–5.1	$\mathbb{H}$ $\mathbb{R}$
R	10/30	No class		
T	11/4	Syntactic properties Constituency Syntactic categories	·LF 5.2–5.4	$\mathbb{R}$
R	11/6	Building phrases	·LF 5.5	$\mathbb{R}$
T	11/11	Building phrases Ambiguity		
R	11/13	Special topic TBD		

Semantics

T	11/18	What is semantics Lexical semantics The truth	·HW 5 (Syntax) due ·LF 6.0–6.3	$\mathbb{H}$ $\mathbb{R}$
R	11/20	Compositional semantics Assertion and presupposition Scope relations	·LF 6.4	$\mathbb{R}$

Language and culture

T	11/25	What is language and culture Linguistic anthropology Language and thought	·HW 6 (Semantics) due ·LF 11.0–11.2	$\mathbb{H}$ $\mathbb{R}$
R	11/27	Language and power Politeness	·LF 11.3–11.4	$\mathbb{R}$
T	12/2	Special topic TBD	·HW 7 (Language and culture) due	$\mathbb{H}$