



Syllabus (2021-2)*

Course Title	The Story of Human Language	Course No.	11183-01
Department/ Major	English Language & Literature	Credit/Hours	3/3
Class Time/ Classroom	Mondays 11am-12:15pm and Thursdays 12:30pm-1:45pm		
Instructor	Name: Isaac Gould	Department: English Language & Literature	
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Office Hours/ Office Location	By appointment / Inmunkwan 520		

I. Course Overview

1. Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the scientific study of human language. In it we will survey a number of theoretical areas that are central to current linguistic theory (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics – areas that you can learn about further in more advanced classes, most of them here at Ewha) and explore interdisciplinary areas such as language acquisition and sociolinguistics. We will look at linguistic examples from, and learn to analyze linguistic data from, a broad range of languages. This course will help students gain a better understanding of what human language is, how we learn it, and how we use it in our daily lives. We will also examine varieties of different languages around the world in order to better understand the systematicity in language variation and why, as linguists, we aren't worried about what sounds 'right' and what sounds 'wrong'. We will see that many varieties that are considered by some to be 'wrong' are actually richer in linguistic features than standard varieties and provide us with a wealth of understanding about language in general.

2. Prerequisites

None

3. Course Format



Lecture-Discussion
100%

We will work toward meeting the course objectives with both instructor-led lecturing and group discussion during class. Part of this will involve doing exercises in class with unfamiliar data. These exercises provide crucial preparation for the exams. Coming to class and participating are thus a central part of the learning experience for this course. Slides (including some video content) will be projected during class; these slides will be made available later online.

4. Course Objectives

A core objective of this course is to expose you to the idea that language can be an object of scientific study and that it is rule-based. From this perspective, you can gain an appreciation of language diversity. This is done in part by exposing you to data from various languages and language varieties. Relatedly, a further objective is to teach you linguistic tools that allow you to analyze and feel comfortable with unfamiliar data.

5. Evaluation System

Mid-term Exam	Final Exam	Participation
45%	45%	10%

- One mid-term exam will be given during the course of the semester; this will focus on course content that was covered in the first half (approximately) of the course. There will also be a final exam at the end of the semester that is cumulative; it will focus on course content from throughout the semester.
- Exams will contain multiple-choice and possibly some short-answer questions.
- You are expected to come to class and participate in discussions. If you must be absent from class for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to find out what material you missed.
 - Participation includes asking questions! Of course, you can ask me questions privately, but it's even better if you ask them so all your classmates can hear the question (or read it, if posting online). Your classmates probably have the same/a similar question (trust me!), and so asking so that everyone can hear makes it a better learning experience for you and for me.
 - If you have a long list of questions, schedule a time to (virtually) meet for office hours, and you can ask all your questions.
- All students are expected to check the CyberCampus course website (<http://cyber.ewha.ac.kr/index.php>), as well as email, regularly for the most updated course



information. Students are expected to keep up to date with all such information.

- For each student, the university officially has an email address on record, which I may use to send important messages. Please check the appropriate email account regularly.
- Do not expect a response if you send me a message via the “Message” function on CyberCampus. I may simply ask you to send me an email.
 - The format of this course may change at any time, including (but not limited to) the course schedule and course evaluations.

II. Course Materials and Additional Readings

1. Required Materials

- Lecture slides (to be made available on <http://cyber.ewha.ac.kr/index.php>)

2. Supplementary Materials

- There may be some short articles to read (to be made available on <http://cyber.ewha.ac.kr/index.php>)

3. Optional Additional Readings

- *An Introduction to Language*, 9th/10th (editors: Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams) is an optional textbook if you would like to do additional reading. The material it has is similar to much of what we talk about in class, but it has some differences, and so you should always follow what we say in class in case of any differences.

III. Course Policies

- As a general rule, you will not be able to take an exam outside of the time when the rest of the class take it. If an emergency occurs and you are not able to attend class, let me know as soon as possible to discuss class requirements.
- Communication with me is crucial. If you find you are having difficulty with any part of the course, please get in touch with me right away so that we can work together to remedy the situation. If there is some non-course-related issue that you feel is contributing to making the course difficult, come talk to me about it as soon as possible. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of talking to me if you have any questions or concerns – don’t wait until it’s too late! Also, if you find that any part of this course is something you particularly enjoy or find interesting, do let me know



so that I can help you enhance the experience and steer you in directions to find opportunities to grow independently.

- If you have a **short** question, you can email me about it. Do not email me with a long list of questions. If you have more than a short question, schedule an appointment with me for office hours.
- Academic dishonesty is an unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form, including but not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and sharing your work with another student. If you are suspected of violating academic integrity standards, you should not expect to receive any credit for the work in question, and you should expect to be reported. Disciplinary action, in accordance with university policy, may result in more serious penalties.

IV. Approximate Course Schedule (subject to change)

- Chapters refer to chapters you can read in the optional textbook

Week	Date	Topics & Class Materials, Assignments
Week 1	(09/02)	Preliminaries + What is language?
	(09/06)	What is language? (continued) (Chapter 1)
Week 2	(09/09)	What is language? (continued 2) + Brain and Language (Chapter 10)
	(09/13)	Brain and Language (continued) (Chapter 10)
Week 3	(09/16)	Brain and Language (continued 2) (Chapter 10)
	(09/20)	No class – Chuseok
Week 4	(09/23)	Brain and Language (continued 3) + Phonetics (Chapter 10) + (Chapter 5)
	(09/27)	Phonetics (continued) (Chapter 5)
Week 5	(09/30)	Phonetics (continued 2) (Chapter 5)
	(10/04)	No class – National Foundation Day



Week	Date	Topics & Class Materials, Assignments
Week 6	(10/07)	Phonetics (continued 3) (Chapter 5)
	(10/11)	No class – Hangeul Day
Week 7	(10/14)	Phonetics (continued 4) + Phonology (Chapters 5) + (Chapter 6)
	(10/18)	Phonology (continued) (Chapter 6)
Week 8	(10/21)	Phonology (continued 2) (Chapter 6)
	(10/25)	Mid-term Exam
Week 9	(10/28)	Review + Morphology (Chapter 2)
	(11/01)	Morphology (continued) (Chapter 2)
Week 10	(11/04)	Morphology (continued 2) (Chapter 2)
	(11/08)	Morphology (continued 3) (Chapter 2)
Week 11	(11/11)	Syntax (Chapter 3)
	(11/15)	Syntax (continued) (Chapter 3)
Week 12	(11/18)	Syntax (continued 2) (Chapter 3)
	(11/22)	Syntax (continued 3) + Semantics (Chapter 3) + (Chapter 4)
Week 13	(11/25)	Semantics (continued) (Chapter 4)
	(11/29)	Semantics (continued 2) + Language Acquisition (Chapter 4)
Week 14	(12/02)	Language Acquisition (continued)



Week	Date	Topics & Class Materials, Assignments
	(12/06)	Language Acquisition (continued 2)
Week 15	(12/09)	Language Variation
	(12/13)	Language Variation (continued)
Week 16	(12/16)	Final Exam

V. Special Accommodations

- According to the University regulation #57, students with disabilities can request special accommodation related to attendance, lectures, assignments, and/or tests by contacting the course professor at the beginning of semester. Based on the nature of the students' requests, students can receive support for such accommodations from the course professor and/or from the Support Center for Students with Disabilities (SCSD). Any student who has a disability that may prevent his/her ability to participate fully in the course should contact me as soon as possible so that class requirements can be discussed.
- Any student for whom there are mandated religious observances that conflict with the course schedule should contact me as soon as possible so that class requirements can be discussed.

* The contents of this syllabus are not final.