# Fall 2018 LIN 110: Introduction to Linguistic Analysis

**Lectures:** MW 1025-1140 Morey 525; **Workshops**: one per week

**Instructor:** Maya R Abtahian

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**Office:** Lattimore 514

**Office hours:** Thursdays 1:30-3:30 pm or by appointment (email or talk to me in person for an appointment)

**TA:** Rachel Coons

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**Office hours:** Mondays 7-9 pm, Gleason Library, or by appointment

**Course description:**

This course introduces students to the study of the structure of human language. We will cover the six core areas of linguistic investigation: Phonetics (articulation, acoustics, and perception of speech sounds), Phonology (sound patterns), Morphology (internal structure of words and their organization in the mental lexicon), Syntax (internal structure of phrases and sentences), Semantics (word and sentence meaning), and Pragmatics (language use in context). The course focuses on developing skills in the areas of linguistic data analysis and interpretation of linguistic data in ways that aim to address theoretical and empirical issues in the study of language.

**Course objectives:**

1. Students will understand the basic goals and concepts of linguistics;

2. Students will be able to apply methods and techniques for describing and analyzing language;

3. Students will understand major research questions in the subfields of linguistics (i.e., Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics);

4. Students will develop inquisitiveness about language and other related phenomena.

**Classroom policies**:

* This classroom respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities, and I encourage you to talk with me about any concern or situation that affects your ability to complete your academic work successfully. Undergraduates requiring classroom accommodations should contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, 1-154 Dewey Hall, (585) 275-9049. Information about the accommodation process can be found at: [www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/undergraduate/disability](http://www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/undergraduate/disability)
* Policy on academic honesty: You are encouraged to discuss class material with your fellow students. All written work (i.e. your language journals and homework assignments) must be written up on your own in your own words. If you make use of anybody else’s ideas, cite your source -- whether that source is a print publication, a web site, or a comment made by a classmate. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and for avoiding it: see the College policy at <http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/>.
* This course, like all courses, has a point of entry into debate; i.e., something it wants to show you, a position, and/or a perspective. Like many courses, it is not neutral or objective. Given this fact, it is important that you understand that you need not embrace the course perspective in order to be successful in it. You are strongly encouraged to be a critical thinker about everything in this course, including its perspective.
* Policy on having a judgment free classroom: In this class we discuss a number of social and linguistic issues, some of which may be controversial, and some of which may be personal. In order to create an environment that is supportive, inclusive, and intellectually stimulating, individual students must feel that their voices are heard and respected. Every person is responsible for his/her language and interactions, and should show regard for others while valuing free speech.
* You are expected to attend all lectures and workshops and complete the readings and assignments on time. If you will not be able to attend due to a religious holiday or travel, you must let me know ahead of time and complete any assignments ahead of time. In general it will not be possible to make up late work, but in case of a genuine personal or medical emergency you should contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements.
* All assignments and course materials, including updates to the schedule, additional readings, quizzes, etc., will be posted on [Blackboard](my.rochester.edu). Students will be emailed through Blackboard with notifications of new assignments, etc., when they are posted. Please make sure that these emails go to an address that you regularly check. If you have questions about how to use Blackboard, *ask me* or ask someone in University IT (275-2000, univithelp@rochester.edu).

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Required text:** The required textis *An Introduction to Language, 11th Edition* (Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams). It is available at the River Campus bookstore.

**Workshops:** In addition to the lectures each week, each student must attend a weekly 75-minute workshop. You should have registered for one of these workshops when you registered for the course. If you have not yet registered for a workshop you should do so ASAP. If you need to miss workshop for any reason you must let your Peer leader and me know ahead of time; otherwise you will be counted as absent. You can miss one workshop without any penalty.

Each LIN110 workshop is led by a Peer leader to facilitate discussion of course-related topics and exercises. Peer leaders are not teaching assistants and will not have the answers to exercises ahead of time. Their primary role as near-peers is to help facilitate discussion between students.

Contact information for each peer leader:

Amanda Gillen [agillen@u.rochester.edu](mailto:agillen@u.rochester.edu)

Maggie Bentley [mbentle3@u.rochester.edu](mailto:mbentle3@u.rochester.edu)

Keneon Williams [kwilli62@u.rochester.edu](mailto:kwilli62@u.rochester.edu)

**Requirements and Grading:**

There are four main components to your grade: exams, your language journal, workshop attendance and assignments. Your total score for this class is out of 300 points; the breakdown is below. This score will be converted to a percentage and a letter grade following the schema below. Participation is not a formal component of your grade, but will be used to determine whether borderline grades are rounded up. Questions about grading may be submitted to the instructor in person or by email but will be evaluated outside of class.

**Language journal**: Your language journal is your opportunity to apply your linguistic knowledge to your everyday life. Each student should write 4 journal entries over the course of the semester. Each one should include a 1-2 paragraph description of some observation about language (something that has happened to you or you have observed) and a 1-2 paragraph analysis of why it is linguistically interesting. Each journal entry should be no more than a page in length, and should be submitted on Blackboard before class on the day it is due. You must show how the concepts you have learned in this class help you understand what is going on. This includes using phonetic symbols (the IPA) and morphological or syntactic trees to explain your point(s) as well as terminology from your textbook and readings. Excellent journal entries (that demonstrate creative thinking and application of knowledge acquired in class to an interesting observation about language) will receive 10 points.

**Exams**: There will be two in-class midterm exams and a final exam during the final exam period.

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| --- | --- |
| Workshops | 10 x 2 pts = 20 |
| Language Journal | 4 x 10 pts = 40 |
| Homework Assignments | 6 x 10 points = 60 |
| Midterm Exams | 2\* 50 = 100 |
| Final Exam | 80 |
| TOTAL | 300 pts |

**Grading schema:**

94 -100 A

90 – 93 A-

87 – 89 B+

83 – 86 B

80 – 82 B-

77 – 79 C+

73 – 76 C

70 – 72 C-

67 – 69 D+

63 – 66 D

60 – 62 D-

0 – 59 E

**Schedule**:

# This schedule is subject to adjustment. Any changes will be announced on Blackboard. Readings should be done before that day’s class. Language journal (LJ) entries are due before class on the day that they are listed).

|  |  |  |
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| **Dates** | **Topic** | **Assignment (**due **before** class**)** |
| W 1/17 | Introduction |  |
| M 1/22 | What is Linguistics? | Read Chapter 1 |
| W 1/24 | Morphology | Read Chapter 2 |
| M 1/29 | Morphology |  |
| W 1/31 | Morphology | Language Journal 1 due  *Workshops start this week* |
| M 2/5 | Syntax | Read Chapter 3  Homework 1 due |
| W 2/7 | Syntax |  |
| M 2/12 | Syntax |  |
| W 2/14 | Meaning | Read Chapter 4 |
| M 2/19 | Meaning | Homework 2 due |
| W 2/21 | Meaning | Language Journal 2 due |
| M 2/26 | Exam 1 |  |
| W 2/28 | Phonetics | Read Chapter 5 |
| M 3/5 | Phonetics |  |
| W 3/7 | Phonetics |  |
| M 3/19 | Phonology | Read Chapter 6  Homework 3 due |
| W 3/21 | Phonology |  |
| M 3/26 | Phonology | Language Journal 3 due |
| W 3/28 | Language in society | Read Chapter 7  Homework 4 due |
| M 4/2 | Language in society | Smith 2009, Taseer 2015 |
| W 4/4 | Language change | Read Chapter 8 |
| M 4/9 | Language endangerment | Homework 5 due |
| W 4/11 | Exam 2 |  |
| M 4/16 | Writing systems |  |
| W 4/18 | Language acquisition | Read Chapter 9  Language Journal 4 due |
| M 4/23 | Language acquisition | Homework 6 due |
| W 4/25 | Language and the brain | Read Chapter 10; Watch video on Genie |
| M 4/30 | Review |  |
| FINAL EXAM Tuesday, May 8 12:30-3:30 pm | | |

**References**:

Finegan, Edward. 2014. *Language: Its Structure and Use.* Cengage Learning.

Fromkin, Victoria, Robert Rodman, and Nina Hyams. 2014. *An Introduction to Language*. 10th Edition. Cengage Learning.

Hudson, Grover. 2000. *Essential Introductory Linguistics*. Blackwell.

*Language Files 11*. Ohio State University

Hale, Kenneth. 1992. On endangered languages and the safeguarding of diversity. *Language* 68(1):1-4.

Johnson, Jacqueline S. and Elissa L. Newport. 1989. Critical Period Effects in Second Language Learning: The Effect of Maturational State on the Acquisition of English as a Second Language. *Cognitive Psychology* 21: 60-99.

Ladefoged, Peter. 1992. Another view of endangered languages. *Language* 68(4): 809-811.

Poeppel, David (2014). The neuroanatomic and neurophysiological infrastructure for speech and language. *Current Opinion in Neurobiology, 28,* 142-149.

Smith, Zadie. 2009. “Speaking in Tongues”. *New York Review of Books.* February 26, 2009.

Taseer, Aatish. 2015. “How English Ruined Indian Literature”. *New York Times*, March 19, 2015.

Other useful people:

**Peer advisor for Linguistics:**

Oleaser Johnson [ojohnso@u.rochester.edu](mailto:skowals@u.rochester.edu)