Linguistics

Interim chair
- Jill Beckman

Undergraduate major: linguistics (B.A.)
Undergraduate minor: linguistics
Graduate degrees: M.A. in linguistics; Ph.D. in linguistics
Faculty: http://clas.uiowa.edu/linguistics/people/faculty
Web site: http://clas.uiowa.edu/linguistics/

Linguistics is the scientific study of human languages, which are highly complex systems. Areas of study include word structure (morphology), speech sounds (phonetics) and their patterns of combination and contrast (phonology), sentence structure (syntax), and meaning relations (semantics).

Linguists study well-known and familiar languages, such as English, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese. They also study less well-known languages and even those languages about which little has been discovered. While human languages are different from one another in many ways, there are broad similarities among them, supporting the idea that the capacity for language is part of human cognitive functions.

The description of formal patterns of human language has a number of applications. Linguistics is connected to psychology and to speech and hearing, in studying how children learn language, how speakers process and interpret language, and how injuries and disorders affect both production and perception of speech. Linguistics also is linked with anthropology and other social sciences in studying how language use relates to culture, region, class, and gender. Linguists collaborate with computer scientists to construct computational representations of syntax and semantics for processing natural languages.

Linguistics has important ties with instruction in foreign languages and in English as a second language (ESL). Studies of how languages are learned are based in part on analysis of the languages in question. They also are grounded strongly in theories of second language acquisition, which in turn are related to theories of how linguistic knowledge is represented in the mind.

People with linguistic training teach ESL and help clinicians retrain people with linguistic disabilities. Some help design school programs for minority groups or intelligence and achievement tests. Linguists also work in occupations related to law, the computer industry, and foreign languages.

High scores on verbal, analytic, and quantitative aptitude tests are indicators of success in linguistics. Although few aspects of the field deal with numbers, students must be able to reason logically and explicitly and deal with formulas and abstract symbols.

Undergraduate Programs of Study
- Major in linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)
- Minor in linguistics

Depending on their vocational goals, students planning to major in linguistics should consider pursuing their studies either through the M.A. in linguistics with a professional focus or through the Ph.D., or they should complete a second major. Appropriate companion fields include languages, anthropology, computer science, English, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, speech pathology, and elementary and secondary education.

Bachelor of Arts

The Bachelor of Arts with a major in linguistics requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including 30 s.h. of work for the major. Students must maintain a g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education Program.

The major in linguistics prepares students to do basic language analysis in syntax-semantics (sentence patterns and their relation to meanings) and phonology (sound patterns). Elective courses in a variety of subspecialties enable students to tailor the program to their own interests.

The major in linguistics requires the following course work.

All of these:
- LING:3001 Introduction to Linguistics 3 s.h.
- LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics 3 s.h.
- LING:3010 Syntactic Analysis 3 s.h.
- LING:3020 Phonological Analysis 3 s.h.

One of these:
- A course in language history, such as LING:3080
- A course in an old language (classical Greek, Latin, Old English, Sanskrit)

And:
- Electives chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor, bringing total credit in the major to 30 s.h.

Students must complete no fewer than 15 s.h. of requirements for the major at the University of Iowa, including LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics, LING:3010 Syntactic Analysis, and LING:3020 Phonological Analysis.

The course LING:1003 English Grammar does not count toward the linguistics major.

TESL Emphasis

As part of the major in linguistics, students may complete an emphasis in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). The TESL emphasis can prepare students to teach English to nonnative speakers abroad. It also is excellent preparation for graduate work in second language acquisition. TESL emphasis students complete the requirements for the linguistics major listed above, using the following course work to partially satisfy the electives requirement.

Both of these:
- LING:4040 The Structure of English 3 s.h.
- LING:4050 Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language

One of these:
degree program. Students in the joint Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts master's degree in linguistics with a Teaching English as Undergraduate linguistics majors who plan to earn a Joint B.A./M.A. with TESL Focus

The minor in linguistics requires the following course work.  

**Four-Year Graduation Plan**

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the University’s Four-Year Graduation Plan. (Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.)

**Before the fifth semester begins:** Introduction to Linguistics [LING:3001] and one additional linguistics course  
**Before the seventh semester begins:** three more courses in the major and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree  
**Before the eighth semester begins:** two more courses in the major  
**During the eighth semester:** enrollment in all remaining course work in the major, all remaining General Education courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

**Honors in the Major**

Students majoring in linguistics have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Departmental honors students must complete the required course work for the major and must prepare an honors thesis, working in consultation with their academic advisor. Honors students in linguistics must be members of the University of Iowa Honors Program, which requires students to maintain a cumulative University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.33 and to fulfill other requirements; visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the University’s honors program.

**Minor**

The minor in linguistics requires a minimum of 15 s.h. in linguistics courses, including at least 12 s.h. in University of Iowa courses. The minor must include the courses listed below. Students must maintain a cumulative g.p.a. of at least 2.00 in all courses for the minor and in all UI courses for the minor. Course work in the minor may not be taken pass/nonpass.

The minor in linguistics requires the following course work.  
LING:3001 Introduction to Linguistics 3 s.h.  
LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics 3 s.h.  
LING:3010 Syntactic Analysis 3 s.h.  
LING:3020 Phonological Analysis 3 s.h.  
Additional approved course numbered 3000 or above 3 s.h.

**Joint B.A./M.A. with TESL Focus**

Undergraduate linguistics majors who plan to earn a master’s degree in linguistics with a Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) focus have the opportunity to enroll in the joint Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts degree program. Students in the joint B.A./M.A. program take selected graduate-level courses while they are still undergraduates and may count 12 s.h. of advanced course work toward both degrees. Once students complete the requirements for the bachelor’s degree, they are granted the B.A., and they usually complete the M.A. one year later.

As part of the undergraduate major with TESL focus, B.A./M.A. students take LING:4040 The Structure of English, a course in language history, LING:3001 Introduction to Linguistics, and LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics.

They substitute some graduate-level course work for normal undergraduate requirements. Instead of taking LING:3010 Syntactic Analysis to fulfill the B.A. syntax requirement, they take LING:5010 Introduction to Syntax, the first course in the mandatory two-course syntax sequence for M.A. students. Instead of taking LING:3020 Phonological Analysis to fulfill the B.A. phonology requirement, they take LING:5020 Introduction to Phonology, the first in the graduate two-course phonology sequence.

In addition, LING:4050 Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language and LING:6010 Syntactic Theory count toward both degrees and typically are taken during the senior year.

To be admitted to the program, students must be working toward an undergraduate major in linguistics, must have completed at least 80 s.h. of undergraduate course work (typically by the end of their fifth semester), and must have a g.p.a. of at least 3.50.

**Graduate Programs of Study**

- Master of Arts in linguistics  
- Doctor of Philosophy in linguistics

Department of Linguistics graduate programs emphasize theory and research. Students interested in non-university careers also may take courses in applied linguistics and other fields, either in connection with doctoral work or as an option in the M.A. program.

Iowa’s linguistics department has particular strengths in phonology, syntax, and second language acquisition (SLA).

The phonology curriculum emphasizes current theoretical perspectives, including optimality theory, and the collection, description, and interpretation of novel phonological and phonetic data. Courses feature extensive work in data analysis and problem solving, focusing on construction and evaluation of phonological theories, particularly in light of new empirical data.

The syntax curriculum includes the dual emphases of empirical and theoretical perspectives. It offers a variety of foundational courses that build analytic and argumentation skills, as well as specialized course work on current issues in syntactic theory. The courses consist of intensive work in problem solving. They combine discovery and description of new linguistic data with exploration of the implications of such facts in testing and constructing syntactic theories.

The curriculum in second language acquisition includes courses that provide an overview and analysis of current SLA research conducted within the generative framework, with emphasis on explaining the linguistic competence of second language learners in terms of universal grammar.
as specified by department regulations. Students must achieve proficiency in a foreign language, an approved specialty area of 18 s.h. also is required, and The Ph.D. core includes the following course work (total of 31-37 s.h.).

The Master of Arts in linguistics requires a minimum of 31-37 s.h. of graduate credit with thesis, or 37 s.h. without thesis. All M.A. students complete the following set of required core courses in phonology, syntax, and language acquisition (total of 22 s.h.).

**LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics** 3 s.h.
**LING:5000 Proseminar: Morphosyntax** 1 s.h.
**LING:5010 Introduction to Syntax** 3 s.h.
**LING:5020 Introduction to Phonology** 3 s.h.
**LING:6010 Syntactic Theory** 3 s.h.
**LING:6020 Phonological Theory** 3 s.h.
**LING:6080 Generative Second Language Acquisition** 3 s.h.

One of these:

**LING:5040 Linguistic Field Methods** 3 s.h.
**LING:6040 Linguistic Structures** 3 s.h.
**LING:6050 Language Universals Linguistic Typology** 3 s.h.

Thesis students also complete at least 9 s.h. of electives and may earn up to 6 s.h. for the thesis. Nonthesis students also complete 15 s.h. of Department of Linguistics course work, which may include a 9 s.h. focus (e.g., teaching English as a second language). A student’s advisor must approve all courses that count toward the degree.

A student with a linguistics background may waive up to 6 s.h. of course work if the department determines that he or she completed comparable work before enrolling in the program.

Comprehensive examinations cover phonology, syntax, and applied linguistics (for students who choose this option).

**Doctor of Philosophy**

The Doctor of Philosophy in linguistics requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit, or 73 s.h. for graduates of the M.A. n histoire program. The highly selective program provides students with a strong foundation in theoretical linguistics and helps them develop the skills they will need to explore the close relationship between linguistics and related disciplines.

The Ph.D. core includes the following course work (total of 18 s.h.).

Two upper-level syntax courses numbered LING:7010 or above
Two upper-level phonology courses numbered LING:7020 or above
Two or more seminars

An approved specialty area of 18 s.h. also is required, and students must achieve proficiency in a foreign language, as specified by department regulations. To pass the comprehensive examination for the Ph.D., a student must gain approval for two papers of publishable quality. One must be in phonology or syntax. The other should be in an area of the student’s choosing and must be distinct from the area of the first paper.

An oral defense of the dissertation and three years in residence at the University of Iowa are required. In addition, all candidates are required to gain supervised experience in teaching and research.

**Related Certificate: Cognitive Science of Language**

The Graduate College offers the Certificate in Cognitive Science of Language, which requires a minimum of 12-15 s.h. of graduate credit. Designed to complement doctoral study, the certificate program ensures that students have training in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of language along with strong theoretical grounding in their Ph.D. discipline. See Cognitive Science of Language (Graduate College) in the Catalog for more information.

**Admission**

Applicants to the graduate program in linguistics must complete an application form, submit GRE General Test scores, and have three letters of recommendation sent to the Department of Linguistics. Students whose first language is not English must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. Applications for admission should be submitted as early as possible for the following academic year.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College.

**Financial Support**

Applications should be received by February 1 for the following academic year in order to have priority in consideration for financial aid. Applications received after February 1 are considered for remaining aid. Early submission of an application is strongly encouraged.

Exceptionally well-qualified applicants may be eligible for a Presidential Graduate Research Fellowship. Individuals interested in being nominated for a presidential fellowship should submit all application materials by January 15 for the following academic year.

Applications for all awards are considered only for students whose application for admission is complete.

**Facilities**

The Department of Linguistics has a laboratory equipped with 20 computer workstations for small group instruction, individual work, and student research in speech analysis, second language acquisition, computational linguistics, and other areas. The department also has a soundproof booth connected to a computer with software for speech analysis. Remote terminals and personal computers are also available to students.

The departmental reading room, which contains a modest library, provides a common meeting place for faculty and students. Students have considerable influence on departmental affairs and enjoy a high degree of individual instruction.
Courses

Lower-Level Undergraduate

LING:1000 First-Year Seminar 1 s.h.
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities). Requirements: first-or second-semester standing.

LING:1003 English Grammar 3 s.h.
Recognizing nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech; sentence analysis; subjects, objects; types of sentences; passives, relative clauses; for students with little or no background in English grammar study. Does not count toward the linguistics major.

LING:1010 Language and Society 3 s.h.
Correlations between social and linguistic behavior; methods for discovering and describing socially significant language behavior; educational and political implications of findings. GE: Social Sciences.

LING:1020 Introduction to the Study of Language 3 s.h.
Nontechnical introduction: classification of languages, writing systems, language and the brain, acquisition of first and second languages, bilingualism, animal communication, language and computing.

LING:1030 English Words 3 s.h.
English word formation, basic units of English vocabulary; vocabulary skill expansion; word structure.

LING:1040 Language Rights 3 s.h.
Language minorities and linguistic human rights in the United States and worldwide; language and identity, culture, power; case studies of language rights deprivation. GE: International and Global Issues. Same as ANTH:1040.

LING:1050 Language and Formal Reasoning 3 s.h.
Semantics and sentence structure of English; word meanings, meaning connected to truth conditions, reasoning based on logical connectives and quantifiers, evaluation of valid and invalid arguments. GE: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning.

LING:1060 Languages of the World 3 s.h.
Overview of structural similarities and differences in human language; survey of the world's major language families; emphasis on sentence and word structure, sound systems, and modes of classification. GE: Social Sciences.

Individual participation in faculty research projects.

LING:2090 Special Project arr.

LING:2900 Language and Gender 3 s.h.
Gender-related language variation; current research on gender-specific linguistic forms and usage in the United States and other language communities; introduction to relevant principles of linguistic theory and analysis. GE: Values, Society, and Diversity.

Upper-Level Undergraduate and Graduate

LING:3001 Introduction to Linguistics 3 s.h.
Introduction to the study of human language: sounds and their contrasts and variation, words and meaningful subunits, sentence structure, historical change.

LING:3005 Articulatory and Acoustic Phonetics 3 s.h.
Production and transcription of sounds in human languages; physics of sound, computer analysis of speech sounds. Offered fall semesters. Same as SLA:3400.

LING:3010 Syntactic Analysis 3 s.h.
Introduction to sentence structures and basic abstract relations that characterize them, including word category, word order, hierarchical organization; problem sets from English and other languages as basis for discussion, analysis. Offered spring semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3001.

LING:3020 Phonological Analysis 3 s.h.
Introduction to analysis of sound systems; generative phonological theory; practice in phonological analysis using data from a variety of languages. Offered spring semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3001 and LING:3005.

LING:3030 Child Language-Linguistic Perspectives 3 s.h.
Linguistic theory as applied to first-language learning, including acquisition of sounds, syntax and word meaning, acquisition strategies, properties of input, theories of first-language acquisition. Prerequisites: LING:3001.

LING:3040 Topics in Linguistics 3 s.h.
Varied topics in linguistics; for undergraduates. Prerequisites: LING:3005.

LING:3080 History of the English Language 3 s.h.
Development of phonological and grammatical structure of English, from Old to Modern English; dialectal differentiation in English.

LING:3116 Basic Neuroscience for Speech and Hearing 3 s.h.
Basic anatomy, physiology of central nervous system; emphasis on neural systems involved in normal and disordered communication. Offered fall semesters. Requirements: biology, zoology, or physiology course. Same as CSD:3116.
LING:3117 Psychology of Language 3 s.h.
Theoretical, empirical investigations of linguistic behavior; behaviorist, rationalist models in context of formal linguistic structure and context of models of speech perception and production. Offered spring semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3001. GE: Social Sciences. Same as CSD:3117.

LING:3118 Language Acquisition 1-3 s.h.

LING:3302 Introduction to Chinese Linguistics 3 s.h.
Aspects of modern Chinese linguistics, such as Chinese phonology, syntax, pedagogical grammar, history of the language. Taught in English. Same as SLA:3302, CHIN:3302.

LING:3670 Language Processes 3 s.h.
Psychological processes involved in using languages, including speech perception and production, the meaning of words, understanding and producing sentences, and basics of discourse and pragmatics; developmental and neural bases of language processes. Prerequisites: PSY:2701. Requirements: grade of C- or higher in PSY:2601, grade of C- or higher in PSY:2810, and psychology major; or nonmajor and CSD:1015 or LING:3001. Same as PSY:3670.

LING:4020 Morphology 3 s.h.
Lexicon and principles of word formation; principal processes of inflection, derivation, and compounding found in the world's languages; relation to phonology, syntax; practice in morphological analysis from a variety of languages. Prerequisites: LING:3001.

LING:4030 Introduction to Computational Linguistics 3 s.h.
Introduction to computational linguistics; focus on theory and practice of natural language processing and syntactic and semantic analysis. Same as CS:4460.

LING:4040 The Structure of English 3 s.h.
Descriptive analysis of English, including word and sentence structure; focus on relevance to teaching English as a second language. Offered fall semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3001.

LING:4040 The Structure of English 3 s.h.
Descriptive analysis of English, including word and sentence structure; focus on relevance to teaching English as a second language. Offered fall semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3001.

LING:4050 Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language 3 s.h.
Observations of ESL and intensive English classes at the University; design and presentation of short lessons, text evaluation, demonstrations of innovative approaches of the last decade; materials. Offered spring semesters. Prerequisites: LING:3005 and LING:4040. Same as SLA:4401.

LING:4060 Introduction to Semantics 3 s.h.
Overview of meaning in natural language mapped onto lexical and syntactic structures; formal logical and set theory description; discussion of truth conditions, compositionality, presupposition, definiteness, quantification in natural language. Requirements: course in syntax.

LING:4080 Linguistic Theory and Second Language Acquisition 3 s.h.
Introduction of research results obtained by generative second language acquisition framework and their implications for classroom teaching methods; current views of language architecture; focus on inflectional morphology and linguistic interfaces, which have been proposed to be severe bottlenecks for acquisition; research findings on acquisition of syntax, phonology, semantics, linguistic pragmatics; pedagogical implications of these findings. Prerequisites: LING:3010 and LING:3020. Same as SLA:4080.

LING:4090 Practical Phonetics 3 s.h.
Contemporary articulatory and acoustic research, including second-language acquisition, elicitation and computer analysis of primary linguistic data. Prerequisites: LING:3005.

LING:4589 Philosophy of Language 3 s.h.
Main issues in contemporary philosophy of language; topics may include theories of meaning, truth, belief, interpretation, translation, speech acts, performatives, rule following, reference, naming, propositional attitudes, metaphor. Same as PHIL:4589.

Graduate

LING:5000 Proseminar: Morphosyntax 1 s.h.
Basic morphological analysis of languages other than English; morphological markers of syntactic relations (morphosyntax), such as case/agreement, possession, switch reference and other inflectional marking. Corequisites: LING:5010.

LING:5010 Introduction to Syntax 3 s.h.
Methods and argumentation for formal analysis of sentence structure through induction from language data of central concepts and relations; hypothesis testing, empirical bases of theoretical concepts. Corequisites: LING:5000. Same as SLA:5010.

LING:5020 Introduction to Phonology 3 s.h.
Analysis of sound systems, focus on early generative phonological theory; extensive practice in analysis using data from a variety of languages; linguistic argumentation. Prerequisites: LING:3005. Same as SLA:5020.

LING:5030 First Language Acquisition 3 s.h.
Child language from a crosslinguistic perspective. Prerequisites: LING:3005 and (LING:4040 or LING:5010). Same as SLA:5401.
LING:5040 Linguistic Field Methods 3 s.h.
Collection and analysis of primary linguistic data from unfamiliar language; methods of elicitation, theory, practical problems; extensive practice in eliciting data from a consultant. Prerequisites: LING:3005. Requirements: a course in syntax and a course in phonology.

LING:5070 Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language 3 s.h.
Practical experience in TESL, observation and participation in intensive English classes; design and teaching of ESL classes under supervision. Offered summer sessions. Prerequisites: LING:4050.

LING:5090 Special Projects arr.
Theoretical and applied topics.

LING:6010 Syntactic Theory 3 s.h.
Current syntactic theory examined through analysis of data sets, readings in recent research; emphasis on argument construction, statement of formal principles. Offered spring semesters. Prerequisites: LING:5010. Same as SLA:6010.

LING:6020 Phonological Theory 3 s.h.
Post-SPE phonological theory, including autosegmental phonology, feature geometry, the syllable, optimality theory. Prerequisites: LING:5020. Same as SLA:6011.

LING:6040 Linguistic Structures 3 s.h.
Grammatical and/or phonological structure of a selected language or language family.

LING:6050 Language Universals Linguistic Typology 3 s.h.
Proposed universal principles of linguistic structure; approaches to classification of languages on the basis of grammatical and phonological structure. Prerequisites: LING:5010.

LING:6080 Generative Second Language Acquisition 3 s.h.
Overview of current second-language acquisition research in the generative linguistic framework; focus on characterizing second language learners' linguistic competence and how it is constrained by principles of universal grammar. Offered fall semesters. Prerequisites: (LING:3010 or LING:5010) and (LING:3020 or LING:5020). Same as SLA:6452.

LING:6101 Cognitive Science of Language Proseminar I 3 s.h.
Survey of five major disciplines within language sciences: formal linguistic, communication disorders, psychological, neuroscience, and computational approaches. Requirements: graduate standing in communication sciences and disorders, linguistics, psychology, or neuroscience. Same as PSY:6102, CSD:6102.

LING:6190 Topics in Comparative Romance Linguistics 3 s.h.
Comparative study of phonology, morphology, or syntax of the main Romance languages as informed by linguistic theory; diachronic or synchronic perspective. Recommendations: additional graduate course work in linguistics. Same as SPAN:6190, CLSA:6990, SLA:6302.

LING:6415 Seminar: Language, Gender, and Sexuality 3 s.h.
Role of language and discourse in cultural constructions of gender identities and relations, including domination and subordination; theoretical perspective and methodological approaches that have shaped thought on the language/gender nexus. Same as ANTH:6415, GWSS:6415.

LING:6900 Master's Thesis arr.

LING:7000 Seminar: Spanish Linguistics 3 s.h.
Same as SPAN:7000.

LING:7010 Advanced Syntactic Theory 2-3 s.h.
Recent developments in syntax; comparison of theories, argumentation, and uses of data. Prerequisites: LING:6010. Same as SLA:7401.

LING:7020 Advanced Phonological Theory 2-3 s.h.
Current issues. Prerequisites: LING:6020. Same as SLA:7402.

LING:7040 Topics in Linguistic Theory 2-3 s.h.
Varied topics in linguistic theory; for graduate students.

LING:7090 Seminar: Problems in Linguistics 2-3 s.h.
Intensive study of theoretical and practical problems. Same as SLA:7404.

LING:7100 Special Projects arr.