

Linguistics

Director, Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures

- Jill N. Beckman (Linguistics)

Chair, Department of Linguistics

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Undergraduate major: linguistics (BA)

Undergraduate minor: linguistics

Graduate degrees: MA in linguistics; PhD in linguistics

Faculty: <https://linguistics.uiowa.edu/people/faculty>

Website: <https://linguistics.uiowa.edu/>

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 world 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 underserved groups or intelligence and achievement tests. Linguists also work in occupations related to law, the computer industry, and world 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.

The Department of Linguistics is one of the academic units in the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Related Certificate

Cognitive Science of Language

The Graduate College offers the graduate Certificate in Cognitive Science of Language. 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 PhD discipline. See the Certificate in Cognitive Science of Language in the catalog for more information.

Programs

Undergraduate Programs of Study

Major

- Major in Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)

Minor

- Minor in Linguistics

Graduate Programs of Study

Majors

- Master of Arts in Linguistics
- Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics

Facilities

The Center for Language and Culture Learning provides a wide variety of facilities and services to the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures (DWLLC), including a 24-computer Instructional Technology Center (ITC) and five All-In-One Studios/small group study rooms equipped with video production and editing software; a Computer Assisted Language Learning Lab with 25 computers integrated with Sanako software for language practice; and virtual reality hardware and development space.

The center provides spaces for quiet study as well as for group meetings. Departments, programs, and student organizations are welcome to host conversation hours, film nights, study groups, workshops, and more. Peer education services include peer tutoring programs in many of the languages taught in DWLLC, with both in-person and online availability, as well as the Directed Independent Language Study, through which faculty, staff, or students can be paired with a tutor to learn a language not taught in the DWLLC. Tutors are trained to use the Three Ms for Effective Learning, which include developing a growth mindset, using memory strategies to retain knowledge, and reflecting on learning gains.

Courses

Linguistics Courses

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. Same as WRIT:1003.
- 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:1030 English Words** 3 s.h.
English word formation, basic units of English vocabulary; vocabulary skill expansion; word structure. Same as WRIT:1030.
- 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.
- LING:1070 Language Attitudes: Is How You Sound How You Are Seen?** 3 s.h.
Pretend that you are making a phone call to ask about ordering a textbook and the person who answers is a stranger to you; you will immediately start to form opinions about that person (and about any other talkers you interact with) based upon the way they speak—where they are from, whether they are a native speaker of English, and even how well educated they are—and whether you are aware or not, these opinions and impressions you have will influence your interaction with that person and are based in language ideologies that all people have regarding how others sound; students explore common language ideologies and reflect upon their own. Taught in English. GE: Diversity and Inclusion.
- LING:2010 Research Practicum** arr.
Individual participation in faculty research projects.
- LING:2090 Special Project** arr.
- LING:2248 The Invention of Writing: From Cuneiform to Computers** 3 s.h.
Invention of writing as one of the most momentous events in the history of human civilizations; how the use of written sign systems, notations, maps, graphs, encryptions, and most recently, computer programs have consequences that reach deeply into all aspects of people's lives; how writing fascinates and delights, fosters reflexive thinking and facilitates development of complex societies, and gives rise to institutions of social power and control; students explore the invention of writing and its consequences in broad international and interdisciplinary context. Taught in English. Same as ANTH:2248, ASIA:2248, CL:2248, CLSA:2048, COMM:2248, GRMN:2248, HIST:2148, IS:2248, TRNS:2248, WLLC:2248.
- LING:2900 Language, Gender, and Sexuality** 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 and Culture.
- 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. Requirements: LING:3001 or LING:3020 or LING:3080 or LING:5020.
- LING:3080 History of the English Language** 3 s.h.
Development of phonological and grammatical structure of English, from Old to Modern English; selected issues in the history of England. Same as WRIT:3080.
- LING:3101 Introduction to Korean Linguistics** 3 s.h.
Introduction to various topics in Korean linguistics including sentence structures, sound patterns, word formation, discourse structures, and historical background of Korean language. Taught in English. Recommendations: two years of Korean language study. Same as KORE:3100.
- LING:3105 Linguistic Aspects of the Lusophone World** 3-4 s.h.
Introduction to Portuguese incorporating formal (theoretical), historical, and sociolinguistic perspectives; linguistic analysis of phonetics/phonology, morphology, and syntax; origins of Portuguese and its expansion to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Taught in English. Same as PORT:3105, SPAN:3105.
- 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.
Introduction to scientific study of language use; language approached from a multidisciplinary perspective, integrating theories and methods of psycholinguistics, neuropsychology, and communication sciences and disorders. GE: Social Sciences. Same as CSD:3117.

- LING:3118 Language Acquisition** 1-3 s.h.
Models of children's language acquisition; child language/communication development from infancy through school age, in context of current developmental research. Requirements: for CSD:3118—LING:3001 and PSY:1001; for LING:3118—LING:3001 or LING:3117. GE: Social Sciences. Same as CSD:3118.
- LING:3190 Psycholinguistic Aspects of Bilingualism** 3-4 s.h.
Interaction of two languages in a bilingual in terms of sound system, words, and grammar; different meanings of bilingualism, how bilingualism and multilingualism can change across lifespan. Taught in English. Requirements: linguistics or language acquisition course. Same as PSY:3190.
- LING:3195 Linguistics Lab I** 1-3 s.h.
Hands-on research experience collecting and analyzing linguistic data. Requirements: at least one linguistics course.
- LING:3290 Statistical and Experimental Methods in Linguistics** 3 s.h.
Introduction to basic experimental design; critical analysis of scientific claims; overview of common methods in experimental linguistics; introduction to statistics with emphasis on common data types in linguistics. Prerequisites: (LING:3010 or LING:5010) and (LING:3020 or LING:5020). Requirements: advanced standing in linguistics program and completion of core courses in syntax and phonetics/phonology at undergraduate or graduate level.
- 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 CHIN:3302, SLA:3302.
- LING:3410 Exploring TESL for Fulbright Students** 1 s.h.
Introduction to second language acquisition, structure of English, and methods of teaching English to speakers of other languages; opportunities to observe theory in action; students read and discuss articles, observe a variety of teachers and skills, and reflect on their experiences and how they can prepare for future teaching assignments during the Fulbright experience. Taught in English. Requirements: application to Fulbright program. Recommendations: prior or concurrent enrollment in LING:3001.
- 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:2811 with a minimum grade of C- and PSY:2601 with a minimum grade of C-) or CSD:1015 or LING:3001. Same as PSY:3670.
- LING:3860 German Language and Society** 3 s.h.
Introduction to sociolinguistics in context of German-speaking countries; major topics include German dialects, regional and social variation in contemporary German, minority and immigrant languages in German-speaking countries, language and national identity, multilingualism, educational policies related to language teaching and learning, linguistic purism, language use in digital contexts, and language change. Taught in German. Requirements: GRMN:2002, GRMN:2020, or a higher-level course in German. Same as GRMN:3860.
- LING:4010 Undergraduate Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language** 3 s.h.
Practicum experience for undergraduate linguistics majors with an emphasis in teaching English as a second language (TESL); readings and reflection on academic writing, international student writing, and providing feedback on written work; training in the policies and procedures of the Department of Rhetoric's Writing Center; mentored experience in working with international student writers. Prerequisites: LING:3005 and LING:4040. Corequisites: LING:4050. Requirements: undergraduate major in linguistics with TESL emphasis, and minimum cumulative UI GPA of 3.33.
- 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: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 UI; 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:4070 Introduction to the Study of Meaning** 3 s.h.
Introduction to the study of meanings and language use in context; meaning outside the literal semantic interpretation of words used including presuppositions and goals of speaker, expectation of listener, speech acts, conversational implicatures, deixis, discourse functions, and other relevant topics. Taught in English. Prerequisites: LING:3001. Same as FREN:4070.
- 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:4195 Linguistics Lab II** 3 s.h.
Hands-on research experience collecting and analyzing linguistic data. Requirements: at least one linguistics course.
- LING:4291 Statistical and Experimental Methods in Linguistics I** 3 s.h.
Introduction to basic experimental design; critical analysis of scientific claims; overview of common methods in experimental linguistics; research preparation and follow-up. Prerequisites: LING:3010 or LING:3020. Requirements: advanced standing in undergraduate linguistics program or graduate standing in linguistics.
- LING:4292 Statistical and Experimental Methods in Linguistics II** 3 s.h.
Introduction to statistics with emphasis on common data types in linguistics; coding in R. Prerequisites: LING:4291.
- 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.

- LING:4900 Honors: Research and Thesis** arr. 3 s.h.
Guided independent research to earn departmental honors. Prerequisites: LING:3001 and LING:3005. Corequisites: LING:3010 and LING:3020. Requirements: permission from departmental honors advisor.
- 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:5050 Principles of Language Creation: Introduction to Constructed Languages** 3 s.h.
Introduction to language construction (conlanging) with consideration to the task of building a language from a number of different perspectives—structure, evolution, development, typology, and social function; students apply these ideas, with their knowledge of existing languages and historical, social, and grammatical processes they display, to construct their own languages. Requirements: graduate standing or completion of linguistics upper-level undergraduate coursework.
- LING:5070 Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language** 2-3 s.h.
Introduction to assessment design and practice for English as a second language (ESL) classrooms; practical experience in teaching English as a second language through observation and participation in ESL classes; design and teaching of ESL classes under supervision. Prerequisites: LING:4050.
- LING:5090 Special Projects** arr. 3 s.h.
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. Prerequisites: LING:5010 and LING:5020.
- LING:6050 Language Universals Linguistic Typology** 3 s.h.
Proposed universal principles of linguistic structure; approaches to typological classification of languages; patterns in syntactic and morphological structure and constraints on cross-linguistic variation. Prerequisites: LING:5010.
- LING:6080 Topics in 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 CSD:6101, PSY:6101.
- LING:6102 Cognitive Science of Language Proseminar II** 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 CSD:6102, PSY: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. Taught in English. Recommendations: additional graduate coursework in linguistics. Same as SLA:6302, SPAN:6190.
- 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:6483 Multilingual Education and Applied Linguistics** 3 s.h.
Introduction to research in language teaching and learning; theories and research in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropology, and psychology; fundamentals of second language acquisition, educational linguistics, applied linguistics, and methods used in teaching and learning second/foreign languages; consideration of applications and implications of research when reviewing multilingual education policy and practice.
- LING:6900 Master's Thesis** arr. 3 s.h.
- LING:7000 Seminar: Spanish Linguistics** 3 s.h.
Taught in Spanish. 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: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.

LING:7900 PhD Thesis arr.