



Utah State University  
LING/ANTH 4100: Study of Language  
Syllabus-Fall 2013

العلم نور الجهل ظلام  
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**Instructor:** Abdulkafi Albirini  
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**Time:** 8:30-9:20 MWF  
**Place:** 302 Geology  
**Office hours:** 9:30-10:30 a.m. MW

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### I. Course goals:

The primary purpose of this course is to introduce students to the theory and methodology of linguistics and its various subfields. We will survey ways in which human languages are structured, acquired, used, and transformed based on cognitive, contextual, social, and historical factors. This course assumes that students have little to no background knowledge/experience in general linguistics and language acquisition theory. Therefore, we will work together this semester to achieve the following objectives:

- gain factual information about a number of core concepts and principles in the field of linguistics
- gain a broader understanding and appreciation for the study of language;
- develop basic skills in linguistic analysis.

### II. Course resources:

#### Required Textbook:

*An Introduction to Language* (9<sup>th</sup> edition, 2010) by Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman, and Nina Hyams.

The book is available at the University bookstore, and it may be found/purchased online as well.

#### Supplemental Materials:

The rest of the required readings as well as lecture notes, homework assignments, exercises and grades will be posted on the LING/ANTH 100 Canvas site. Go to <https://online.usu.edu/> to access the website.

### III. Student Responsibilities & Major Assignments:

The five major requirements of the course include:

- Classroom participation and attendance (10% of final grade): Students enrolled in this course are expected to come prepared to class. Preparation includes reading the assigned materials, bringing questions to be asked in class, and being ready to participate actively in discussions regarding the theme of the week. Carefully reading the articles and book chapters will (a) allow you to contribute meaningfully to in-class discussion/ activities, (b) allow you to think critically about the topic of the reading, and (c) better prepare you for exams and homework assignments in this

course. Students are **HIGHLY** urged to be in class on time and not to miss classes except in cases of illness, family emergency, and things of that nature. According to the attendance policy of this course, students are allowed three undocumented absences per semester. However, after the third absence, students must provide **legitimate university or physician documentation** to justify their absence; otherwise, one percentage point will be deducted from their attendance grade for every undocumented absence. Your attendance grade is the percentage of the remaining classes that you have attended.

- **Homework exercises (25% of final grade):** Homework exercises provide students an opportunity to apply the knowledge and analytic skills learned during the semester. Homework exercises are usually assigned on a Wednesday and due the following Monday, and will be graded for completeness and correctness. There will be 5 homework exercises. You must turn in a **paper copy** of exercises **in class**. No make-up can be made for any missed exercise except in cases of documented emergencies. A missed or late exercise receives zero points. Collaboration among students is permitted, but **the assignment write-up should be done individually**.
- **Midterm Exam (20% of final grade):** The Midterm exam will be given in class on Monday, 21 October. The exam will be multiple choice questions. The exam is cumulative, that is, it covers all material in the textbook (and related material) up to the time when the test is taken. A missed Midterm exam cannot be made up except in case of documented emergency.
- **Final Exam (30% of final grade):** The final exam will be given on Monday, 9 December between 7:30-9:20 a.m. in 302 Geology. The final exam is cumulative and the format is multiple choice and short-answer questions. In the event that you have an exam conflict, please contact me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.
- **Final research project (15% of final grade):** The final project involves using existing data which you will then analyze linguistically. The topics will be introduced in weeks 11-12 and the details of the projects will be explained then. Students are required to turn in an abstract and data sample (together) and final 5-page paper. Students will prepare a 3-minute presentation of their papers to be made on 6 December. In the presentation, you need to tell us about your topic, methodology, and findings. The project requirements will be due **in class** on Friday, 6 December. Students are bound by the Student Code regarding plagiarism. No plagiarism will be tolerated, and students found plagiarizing will at least receive a zero for this project.

#### **Assignment Policy:**

- All assignments should be typed in a 12-point Times Roman font.
- All assignments are due in hard copy only (Please **DO NOT** send your assignment electronically).
- If your assignment is between 1 and 24 hours late you will be penalized 20% of the assigned points. After one day of the due date, the assignment will be considered missing and zero points will be the official grade.

- Plagiarism is highly discouraged. Students are expected to acknowledge source materials. Please let me know if you have any questions about this issue.

### Class schedule

You are expected to do the readings before class on the day they are listed. An assignment such as “What is Grammar—Language Universals” means “start reading at the heading ‘What is Grammar’ and stop reading when you finish the section named ‘Language Universals.’”

Week/day	Topics & Exercises	Readings
<b>Week 1</b>		
26 Aug	What is Language	Introduction: What is Language & Linguistics?
28 Aug		Ch. 1 Linguistic Knowledge
30 Aug		Ch.1 What is Grammar—Language Universals
<b>Week 2</b>		
2 Sept	Labor Day	No class
4 Sept	What is Language	Ch.1 Animal Language—Language and Thought
6 Sept	Brain & Language	Ch. 2 The Human Brain
<b>Week 3</b>		
9 Sept	Brain & Language	Ch. 2 The Autonomy of Language—Language and Brain Development
11 Sept	Morphology	Ch. 3 Content and Function Words
13 Sept		Ch. 3 Morphemes: The Minimal Units of Meaning-“Pullet Surprises”
<b>Week 4</b>		
16 Sept	<b>HW1 What is Language &amp; Brain due</b>	Ch. 3 Rules of Word Formation
18 Sept	Morphology	Ch. 3 Morphological Analysis: Identifying Morphemes
20 Sept	Syntax	Ch. 4 What the Syntax Rules Do?
<b>Week 5</b>		
23 Sept	Syntax	Ch. 4 Sentence Structure
25 Sept		Ch. 4 Sentence Relatedness
27 Sept		Ch. 4 Syntactic Dependencies-UG Principles & Parameters
<b>Week 6</b>		
30 Sept	<b>HW2 Morphology due</b>	Ch. 5 What Speakers Know about Sentence—Compositional Semantics
2 Oct	Semantics	Ch. 5 Lexical Semantics
4 Oct		Ch. 5 Pragmatics
<b>Week 7</b>		
7 Oct	Phonetics	Ch. 6 Sound Segments
9 Oct		Ch. 6 Articulatory Phonetics
11 Oct		Ch. 6 Prosodic Features—Phonetic Symbols and Spelling
<b>Week 8</b>		
14 Oct	<b>HW3 Syntax &amp; Semantics</b>	No class
16 Oct	Phonology	Ch. 7 The Pronunciation of Morphemes—Phonemes: The Phonological Units of Language
17 Oct		Ch. 7 The Rules of Phonology—Prosodic Phonology

<b>Week 9</b>		
21 Oct	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	Ch. 7 Prosodic Phonology—Why Do Phonological Rules Exist?
23 Oct		Ch. 7 Phonological Analysis
25 Oct	Language Acquisition	Ch. 8 Mechanisms of Language Acquisition
<b>Week 10</b>		
28 Oct	Language Acquisition	Ch. 8 Mechanisms of Language Acquisition
30 Oct		Ch. 8 Knowing More Than One Language
1 Nov		Ch. 8 Is There a Critical Period for L2 Acquisition?
<b>Week 11</b>		
4 Nov	<b>HW4 Phonetics &amp; Phonology due</b>	Ch. 10 Dialects
6 Nov	Language in Society	Ch. 10 Languages in Contact
8 Nov		Ch. 10 Language and Education
<b>Week 12</b>		
11 Nov	Language in Society	Ch. 10 Language in Use Language and Gender: Deborah Tannen: “Women and Men in Conversation” (on Canvas)
13 Nov	Language Change	Ch. 11 The Regularity of Sound Change-Syntactic Change
15 Nov		Ch. 11 Lexical Change
<b>Week 13</b>		
18 Nov	<b>HW5 Language Acquisition &amp; Language in Society due</b>	Ch. 11 Restructuring “Dead” Languages—Extinct and Endangered Languages
20 Nov	Language Change	Ch. 11 The Genetic Classification of Languages—Why Do Languages Change?
22 Nov	Writing	Ch. 12 The History of Writing—Modern Writing Systems
<b>Week 14</b>		
25 Nov	Writing	Ch. 12 Writing and Speech
27 Nov	Thanksgiving break	No class
29 Nov		No class
<b>Week 15</b>		
2 Dec	Research Methods in Linguistics	Gass & Selinker: Data Analysis—Data Collection & Data Elicitation (on Canvas)
4 Dec	Review & Presentations	Review for the Final Exam
6 Dec		Students’ presentations of their final projects

#### V. Assessment:

The students’ final grade will be the culmination of their grades on all class requirements. The students’ final grade will be calculated as follows:

Attendance and participation	10%
Homework exercises (5 * 5 exercises)	25%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%
Final project (3 points for abstract & data sample, 2 for presentation, 10 for paper)	15%
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Total	100%

## **VI. Grading:**

This course will be graded based on the following scale:

A= 93-100 %	A-= 90-92%	B+= 87-89%
B= 83-86%	B-= 80-82%	C+= 77-79%
C= 73-76%	C-= 70-72%	D+= 67-69%
D= 63-66%	D-= 60-62%	F= below 60

## **VIII. Important Dates:**

Monday, 26 August	Beginning of instruction
Monday, 2 September	Labor day (no class)
Friday, 18 October	Fall break
Wed-Fri, 27-29 November	Thanksgiving break (no class)
Friday, 6 December	Last day of instruction
Friday, 6 December	Final Paper in class
Monday, 9 December	Final exam from 7:30 to 9:20 a.m. in 302 Geology

## **VIII. Academic Integrity, "The Honor System"**

([http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus\\_resources.cfm](http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus_resources.cfm))

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to establish the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students. The Honor Pledge: To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity." A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University

## **IX. Disability Services:**

([http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus\\_resources.cfm](http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/teaching/syllabus_resources.cfm))

The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor..."