

LING 6510 Linguistic Analysis
Wednesdays, 4:45-7:15, Main 207
Fall 2012

Course Description & Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Joshua Thoms
Office: Main 002 G
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00–10:00 a.m. or by appointment
E-mail: joshua.thoms@usu.edu
Department Chair: Dr. Brad Hall, Main 204 A

Required textbooks

Hall, C., Smith, P., & Wicaksono, R. (2011). *Mapping Applied Linguistics*. New York: Routledge.
*Textbook companion website: <http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/hall/>

Murray, D., & Christison, M. (2011). *What English Language Teachers Need to Know: Volume 1*.
New York: Routledge.

*Additional readings will be made available to you via this course's Canvas page.

Goals of the course

The primary purpose of this course is to explore a number of issues related to the fields of linguistics, applied linguistics, language acquisition, and foreign language teaching. Some of the topics addressed in the course include the ways in which human languages are structured, how they change, how they reflect the cultures in which they are used, and how they are acquired. In addition, the course will also touch on issues related to how linguistic analysis is carried out. Specifically, we will occasionally look at the methods used in the aforementioned fields to understand how researchers analyze data. As such, we will work together this semester to achieve the following objectives:

- gain factual information about a number of core concepts/ideas in the areas of applied linguistics, language acquisition, and foreign language teaching (i.e., terminology, classifications, methods, historical and current research trends);
- learn fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories of language acquisition;
- develop skills in critical analysis of research questions/areas and methodological approaches commonly used in applied linguistics;
- carry out a research project that involves the linguistic analysis of a second language learner;
- practice your presentation skills by leading a class discussion on an article or book chapter and by presenting your final project at the end of the course to the rest of the class.

Components of the course

Each of the components of the course is described below.

***Readings.** Readings for the course will be comprised of a mix of chapters from *Mapping Applied Linguistics* and *What English Language Teachers Need to Know, Volume 1*, research articles (i.e., articles that explain and report on the results of a research project about a specific linguistic topic), and overview articles (i.e., articles that provide a general overview of a research area/issue in applied linguistics, language acquisition, or foreign language teaching). Many of the articles can be found on our course Canvas page while others will come from the required textbooks. It is imperative that you do a close reading of each assigned article or book chapter for each class meeting. Carefully reading the articles and book chapters will (a) allow you to contribute meaningfully to in-class activities/discussion which will, in turn, allow you to better understand the issues being investigated or presented in the article/chapter, (b) allow you to think critically about the topic of the reading, and (c) better prepare you for your final project in this course and in future courses.

***Responses to the readings.** It is highly suggested that you take notes while doing the readings outside of class. Given that this class is a graduate course and only meets once each week, it will be necessary for you to remember the details of each article or book chapter as you will often be asked to share your thoughts about what you have read. To reiterate, doing the readings and taking notes will help you to (a) better understand the chapter or article, and (b) prepare you to contribute to class discussion in a meaningful way.

***Formal written commentary about and critical discussion of an article.** During the first few weeks of the semester, you will be asked to look through and rank the articles listed on our syllabus that are indicated as articles to be presented/discussed by a student in the class. Once you have ranked the various articles and corresponding dates, Prof. Thoms will assign you one of the articles.

1. Leading a critical discussion of your article. Once it is determined what your article will be, you will then lead a discussion of the article with the rest of the class on the day in which it appears in the syllabus. You should feel free to be creative when deciding how you want to lead the critical discussion. You might choose to design questions or an activity(ies) that target(s) the main concepts of the article in order to engage your fellow class members in discussion. On the day when you lead discussion, part of the class will be yours to address the main point(s) of the article and do your activity(ies). You should be sure to provide a critique of the article/study (especially the way in which it analyzed the data if it reports on an empirical study) along with an overview of the main points of the project (i.e., what was particularly interesting in the article?; what did the researcher/writer present or investigate?; how did he/she analyze the data and what were the findings (if it is an empirical study)?; how does the information in the article inform L2 teaching and learning?; etc.). More detailed information about leading a critical discussion of an article will be provided during the course of the semester.

2. A formal, two-page written commentary about your article. After carefully reading your article, you will write a two-page formal commentary. Your two-page commentary will then be turned in on the same day when you are scheduled to lead a critical discussion of the article

with the rest of the class. The purpose of the formal commentary activity is to introduce you to the professional literature in either the applied linguistics or foreign language teaching fields and to help you become a critical and reflective reader of this literature. More detailed information will be provided to you regarding the structure of your commentary early on in the semester.

***Final project: Interview with a second language learner.** This project is one that is designed to introduce you to linguistic analytical methods commonly used in applied linguistics (more information about those methods will be discussed during the semester) and to learn more about the linguistic and sociolinguistic variables that affect language acquisition and learning. The project will involve you carrying out an interview with a second language learner whose first/native language is something other than English. These learners may be international students studying at USU or adult second language learners who live in Cache Valley or possibly in some other part of Utah. The project will involve you (a) creating a semi-structured interview questionnaire, (b) carrying out/recording the interview with a second language learner, (c) transcribing the interview, (d) analyzing the learner's speech/response(s) given during the interview, and (e) writing up your summary/analysis. The primary purpose of this project is to expose you to data collection and linguistic analysis techniques. In addition to your written project, you will also present your analysis to the rest of the class via a final oral presentation. More details about this project will be provided to you early on in the semester.

***Guest Speakers.** Periodically during the course of the semester, guest speakers will visit our class (i.e., in person or via Skype). These invited guests will provide insights about their own language learning experiences and discuss their areas of expertise in linguistics, applied linguistics, language acquisition, or foreign language teaching and learning. They will also talk about a variety of aspects related to their professional careers to provide you with an understanding about what it is like to work in a particular area of applied linguistics. During these visits, your participation will be crucial as there will be time allocated for you to ask them questions about a variety of topics related to their area(s) of teaching and research. Information about each guest speaker will be provided to you before they visit our course.

***Participation.** This class is designed to provide a lively and supportive forum for the ongoing discussion of and learning about a number of issues related to applied linguistics, language acquisition, and foreign language teaching and learning. Your participation in the activities of the class is a key component of its usefulness. "Participation" in this class includes your regular, active contributions to the discussions about the readings, your involvement in any oral report/presentation given by your classmates or from guest speakers, and regular attendance.

***Attendance.** Please note that given the number of students enrolled in this course, attendance is crucial and will affect the nature of our class discussions. Specifically, when you are gone from class, the rest of the class suffers. Therefore, please try to make it to every class meeting. If you, for any reason, will not be in class, please email me beforehand (if possible) to let me know. Note that you will be allowed to miss **one** class session during the course of the semester without penalty (regardless the nature of the absence). Beginning with the second absence, your overall grade for the course will be lowered by 3 percentage points (3%) per absence.

Grading

Class preparation/attendance/active participation	10%
Two-page written formal commentary of an article	20%
Leading a critical discussion of an article	20%
Oral presentation of final written project	20%
Final written project	30%

Final letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A	93% and above	C	73 – 76%
A-	90 – 92%	C-	70 – 72%
B+	87 – 89%	D+	67 – 69%
B	83 – 86%	D	63 – 66%
B-	80 – 82%	D-	60 – 62%
C+	77 – 79%	F	59% or below

Academic Honesty/Integrity

It is your responsibility to know the definitions and consequences of plagiarism; please read the Academic Honesty/Integrity section of the USU General Catalog:

<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=265&returnto=search>

Other

If you have any complaints about this course, I ask you first to bring to me directly any concerns you may have about instruction in this course. Should we not be able to resolve your concerns to your satisfaction, you would then speak to Dr. Brad Hall, Chair of the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Speech Communication (Main 204 A).

Please let me know during the first week of class (after class or during my office hours) if you have a disability for which special arrangements may be needed, such as modification in seating.

One final note regarding your written work in this course: As is customary in the field of applied linguistics, formal written work should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style. All in-text citations and works listed in the works cited page of your final project need to follow APA guidelines. For more information about the APA citation style, please consult the following:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th edition) (ISBN: 1557987912)

You may also want to consult a useful online guide to citing/writing via APA guidelines (created and maintained by Purdue University): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> (or simply Google “owl” and “purdue”).

Canvas

This course will use a Canvas webpage. Therefore, please be sure that you are checking your USU account or forwarding your USU e-mail to an account you check regularly as announcements/updates about the course will primarily be made via Canvas. In addition, many of the articles will also be made available to you via Canvas. To access this course’s Canvas page, please visit the following website and log in to your Canvas account: <https://online.usu.edu/>

LING 6510 Linguistic Analysis

Syllabus

NOTE 1: This is a tentative academic schedule. The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to due dates, activities, readings, etc., as the semester progresses.

NOTE 2: *MAL* below refers to our required textbook *Mapping Applied Linguistics* while *ELT* refers to the other required text for this course *What English Language Teachers Need to Know (Vol. 1)*.

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
<p>Week 1</p> <p>Aug. 29 Wednesday</p>	<p>Introduction to course; student introductions; summary of terms used in fields of linguistics, applied linguistics, and first and second language acquisition; overview of ‘dead end’ beliefs about linguistics/applied linguistics</p> <p><u>Read:</u> <i>MAL</i>, chapter 1 (pp. 1-21).</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Sept. 5 Wednesday</p>	<p>Continuation of discussion about concepts in linguistics and applied linguistics (e.g., grammar, origins of human language, differentiation between human and animal communication); language variation and change; Prof. Thoms to indicate how/where to complete IRB/Human Subjects online training</p> <p><u>Read:</u> <i>Where Does Language Come From?</i> (Bauer, Holmes, & Warren, 2006) [on Canvas page], most of chapter 2 in <i>MAL</i> (pp. 25-42), AND chapter 2 in <i>ELT</i> “The World of English.”</p> <p><u>Write and bring to class:</u> Activity #1 on top of p. 21 in <i>MAL</i> (i.e., create a short/informal survey using the various ‘dead-end’ beliefs and ask a family member, roommate, or friend to respond to each statement; bring their responses/reactions to class today).</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Sept. 12 Wednesday</p>	<p>Continued discussion on language variation and change (if needed); Historical overview of language study and teaching (structural linguistics, behaviorism, Chomskian views of language/language learning, theories of learning); ways of looking at/analyzing language; intro. to first language acquisition.</p> <p><u>Read:</u> Chapter 10 in <i>ELT</i> “Theories of Learning”</p> <p><u>Bring to class:</u> Information you have found for your assigned web search topic (Structuralism/Saussure, Chomsky/Chomskian views of language acquisition, OR Behaviorism/B.F. Skinner)</p> <p><u>In-class viewing:</u> “Human Language Series” documentary, part 1 <i>Discovering the Human Language</i> “Colorless Green Ideas”</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Sept. 19 Wednesday</p>	<p>Continued discussion of L1 acquisition (universals across languages); research methods; explanation of final research project</p> <p><u>Read:</u> <i>Language Acquisition</i> (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2011), Issues related to data gathering (Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). [on Canvas page]</p> <p><u>In-class viewing:</u> “Human Language Series” documentary, part 2 <i>Acquiring the Human Language</i> “Playing the Language Game”</p> <p><u>To be completed by today’s class:</u> IRB training/CITI certification (http://irb.usu.edu/htm/training)</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 5	In-class visit from True Rubal, IRB Director (Utah State University); Introduction to issues in second language (L2) acquisition; input perspectives
Sept. 26 Wednesday	<u>Read:</u> Chapter 11 in <i>ELT “An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition”, Early Theories in Second Language Acquisition</i> (VanPatten & Williams, 2007) [on Canvas page]

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 6	Continued discussion of L2 acquisition: interaction and negotiation of meaning (if needed); output perspectives; role of speaking/oral discourse in L2 classrooms
Oct. 3 Wednesday	<u>Read:</u> <i>Input and interaction in second language learning</i> (Mitchell & Myles, 2004) AND <i>Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together</i> (Swain & Lapkin, 1998) [on Canvas page] presented/discussed by: _____
	NOTE: You should have located/contacted an ELL research participant by now. You should also schedule with him/her the first interview meeting to take place sometime over the next two weeks.

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 7	Basics of research methodology in applied linguistics: qualitative research techniques
Oct. 10 Wednesday	<u>Read:</u> <i>Qualitative research</i> (Mackey & Gass, 2005), AND <i>Conducting effective interviews</i> (Merriam, 1998) [on Canvas page], presented/discussed by: _____

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 8 Oct. 17 Wednesday	<p>Discussion of analyzing oral and written discourse; overview of/considerations for L2 learning</p> <p><u>Read:</u> <i>MAL</i>, chapter 9 (pp. 197-219); Chapter 9 in <i>ELT</i> “Beyond the Sentence: Spoken and Written Language”, AND <i>An analysis of English-language proficiency among U.S. immigrants</i> (Espenshade & Fu, 1997) [on Canvas page], presented/discussed by: _____</p> <p>NOTE: You should have scheduled interview #2 with your ELL research participant by now. The second interview should take place sometime over the next two weeks.</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 9 Oct. 24 Wednesday	<p>In-class visit from applied linguist Dr. Nobuaki Takahashi, Assistant Professor of Japanese (Elizabethtown College); role of corrective feedback in L2 learning</p> <p>Feedback, noticing and instructed second language learning (Mackey, 2006), AND Critical discussion/presentation of: Corrective feedback, learner uptake, and teacher beliefs: A pilot study (Oskoz & Liskin-Gasparro, 2000) [on Canvas page]; presented/discussed by: _____</p> <p>NOTE: You need to have carried out and transcribed interview #1 with your ELL research participant by this class. Be prepared to share your experience/insights about the first interview in class tonight.</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 10 Oct. 31 Wednesday	<p>Bilingualism; discussion of documentary “Speaking in Tongues”</p> <p><u>Read:</u> <i>MAL</i>, chapter 8 “Bilingual and multilingual education” (pp. 176-196) AND <i>Aquí no se habla español: Stories of linguistic repression in Southwest schools</i>. (MacGregor-Mendoza, 2000) [on Canvas page], presented/discussed by: _____</p> <p><u>In-class viewing:</u> “Speaking in Tongues” documentary</p> <p>NOTE: Prof. Thoms to assign sample linguistic analysis exercise (to be presented and discussed in next week’s class).</p>

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 11 Nov. 7 Wednesday	Morpheme-based studies; Sociolinguistic issues/analyses <u>Read:</u> <i>ELT</i> , chapter 7 “The system of words” (pp. 90-104), AND <i>Sociolinguistic perspectives</i> (Mitchell & Myles, 2004) <u>Bring to class:</u> Sample linguistic analysis assignment

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 12 Nov. 14 Wednesday	L2 literacy/literacies <u>Read:</u> <i>MAL</i> , chapter 6 “Literacy” (pp. 129-153) AND <i>Exploring the feasibility of a pedagogy of multiliteracies in introductory foreign language courses</i> (Willis Allen & Paesani, 2010) [on Canvas page] NOTE: You need to have carried out and transcribed interview #2 with your ELL research participant by this class. Be prepared to share your experience/insights about the second interview in class tonight.

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 13 Nov. 21 Wednesday	No class due to Thanksgiving Holiday.

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 14 Nov. 28 Wednesday	Finish discussing literacy if needed; technology & literacy <u>Read:</u> Multitasking, diversity, and commonality (Gee & Hayes, 2011) AND SLA, language teaching, and technology (Blake, 2008) [on Canvas page]

DATE	TOPIC(S), READINGS & ACTIVITIES
Week 15 Dec. 5 Wednesday	Final project presentations

Your final written project is due to me by 12:00 noon on **Monday, December 10.**

