Date: 14.09.2026

Syllabus - Teaching Program for the Course

Introduction to Linguistics

Masha Esipova| Department of English Literature and Linguistics

Course No 184-1

Course Type:	course
Semester:	2026-2027, Semester A
Day & Time:	Lectures: Tuesday, 12:00-13:30; Thursday, 14:00-15:30 Tutorials: Tuesday, 10:00-11:30
Office hours:	by appointment
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TA:	Hodayah Zargari
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Course description and learning goals

Course Abstract

This course is an introductory survey of linguistics, a field that studies language from a scientific perspective. We will cover the basics of the major aspects of linguistic knowledge: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. We will also discuss sociolinguistics, language acquisition, psycho/neurolinguistics, and applying the mindset and the toolkit of a linguist beyond language proper. Some of the main questions we will address in this course are: Is language innate or learned? What do native speakers of a language know about the sounds, words, and sentences of the language they speak? How do social factors such as region, gender, and ethnicity affect language use? How is language processed in the brain? Throughout the course, we will be looking at language in both the spoken and the signed modalities, discovering cross-modal linguistic universals as well as modality-specific phenomena.

Learning objectives

1. The students will get familiarized with the fundamental notions and tools of linguistics as a scientific study of language.
2. In the process, the students will learn how to identify empirical puzzles and develop basic, but precise analytical solutions for said puzzles.
3. The students will also develop a better understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity and will become better informed about the consequences of linguistic prejudice.

Course structure (subject to change)

Week No.	Lesson topic	Readings
1	Introduction. What is Linguistics?	Language Files, ch. 1
2-3	Morphology	Language Files, ch. 4; Fromkin et al., ch. 2
4-5	Syntax	Language Files, ch. 5; Fromkin et al., ch. 3
6-7	Semantics	Language Files, ch. 6
8	Midterm	
9	Pragmatics	Language Files, ch. 6
10-11	Segmental phonetics and phonology. Prosody	Language Files, ch. 2-3
12	Sociolinguistics	Language Files, ch. 10-11
13	Language acquisition Psycho- and neurolinguistics	Language Files, ch. 8-9
14	Linguistics beyond language Buffer/consolidation	Patel-Grosz et al. 2023

Final grade

Description of the product	Weight in the final score
Pass/fail quizzes	20% of the final grade
Midterm test	40% of the final grade
Final exam	40% of the final grade

Course requirements

Attendance: you can miss two lectures and two tutorials without an explanation. Additional absences require justification for a passing grade, but contact the instructor if you need more flexibility.

Midterm test/final exam policies

On both the midterm test and the final exam, you will be allowed to use any physical notes, but no electronic devices. On quizzes, you can use whatever you want.

Prerequisites

None

Bibliography: Up-to-date reading, viewing, and listening content items

The readings will be made available to the students electronically. Main readings for the course:

- Dawson, H., Hernandez, A. and Shain, C. 2022. *Language Files*. 13th edition. The Ohio State University Press.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R. and Hyams, N. 2014. *An Introduction to Language*. 10th edition. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Patel-Grosz, Pritty, Salvador Mascarenhas, Emmanuel Chemla & Philippe Schlenker. 2023. Super Linguistics: an introduction. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 46. 627–692. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-022-09377-8