

CAS LX 250 Introduction to Linguistics

Tentative schedule; updates will be announced in class and posted on the class website

Class Website <http://www.bu.edu/linguistics/UG/lx250/> **login and password:** to be provided on the first day of class

We will also be using **Blackboard Learn**; class site will be activated by start of classes.

<i>Professor</i>	<i>Teaching Fellows</i>		
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A1 TR 2-3:15	S2 F 9:05-9:55 S4 F 11:15-12:05 S6 F 2:30-3:20	S3 F 11:15-12:05 S8 F 3:35-4:25	S1 F 8:05-9:55 S5 F 1:25-2:15 S7 F 2:30-3:20
<i>Available during the following hours:</i>			
T 3:45 - 4:30 W 10:15 - 12	M 10-12	R 3:30-5:00	W 1-3
or by appointment (to be arranged via email)			
Offices:	621 Commonwealth Ave.		
Room 101 (617) 353-6218	Room B02 (in the basement)		

*E-mail is the preferred means for contact. All students should feel free to attend the office hours of any of the TFs.

Course description

This course examines the fundamental properties that all languages share, and how languages differ, with respect to structure (sound system, word formation, syntax), expression of meaning, acquisition, variation, and change; cultural and artistic uses of languages; comparison of oral, written, and signed languages.

- ◆ Part 1 considers the sound systems in languages; how units of meaning are constructed out of smaller articulatory/discriminatory units that are themselves devoid of meaning; and how those units of meaning combine to form words.
- ◆ Part 2 addresses the organization of phrases and sentences and how language conveys meaning.
- ◆ Part 3 focuses on language variation and change; how language functions in social settings; differences between spoken and written modalities; how language is acquired; and language and the brain.
- ◆ Throughout the course, comparisons will be made between signed and spoken languages.

Hub Learning Outcomes

Scientific Inquiry 1

Students will identify and apply the major concepts used in the natural sciences to explain and quantify the workings of the physical world. This will include an introduction to the scientific approach to the study of language and the way that linguists explain complex linguistic systems.

Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy

Students will demonstrate, through comparative analysis, an understanding of global diversity as expressed in different languages and cultures.

Critical Thinking

Students will be able to identify key elements of thinking, such as habits of distinguishing deductive from inductive modes of inference, recognizing common logical fallacies and cognitive biases, translating language into formal argument, distinguishing empirical claims about matters of fact from normative or evaluative judgments, and recognizing the ways in which emotional responses can affect reasoning processes.

Drawing on skills developed in class, students will be able to evaluate the validity of arguments, including their own.

Course Objectives – Students will:

- ◆ gain an understanding of the nature of human language: how it is structured, acquired, and used;
- ◆ learn about properties shared by all human languages (spoken, written, and signed), as well as ways in which languages and dialects can differ from one another;
- ◆ gain insights into various aspects of languages they already know (i.e., their native language and other languages they have studied) and learn something about languages that they have never encountered;
- ◆ come to appreciate the rich heritage and wide diversity of human language;
- ◆ become familiar with the major subfields of linguistics and the fundamental questions that drive modern linguistic research;
- ◆ develop the ability to analyze sets of data to solve problems and discover regularities;
- ◆ learn to think critically, to evaluate popular beliefs concerning the nature and use of language, and to provide informed contributions to contemporary debates about language.

Readings

Required Textbook: O'Grady, Archibald, Aronoff, and Rees-Miller, *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction, Edition 7*. Bedford/St. Martin's Press. ISBN # 9781319039776. This book is available from Barnes & Noble <<https://tinyurl.com/BU-F19-CAS-LX-250-A1>>.

You may also find less expensive options for purchase on the Internet, but be sure to get edition 7.

Additional Recommended Reading: Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*. Perennial (Harper Collins). ISBN #9780312555283 (paperback). 2000. [or any other edition]

Note: A physical copy of each of the above books is available at Mugar Library Course Reserves.

Top Hat

- ◆ **We will be using using the Top Hat <<https://tophat.com>> classroom response system** for interactivity in the classroom (including attendance, participation, polls, surveys, and other kinds of feedback). You will be required to use this system to submit answers to in-class questions using your smartphone, tablet, or laptop.
 - ◆ Please note that you will have received specific instructions about how to sign up for the use of Top Hat in conjunction with this class. There is a charge for Top Hat. Sorry ☹ Although the price has just increased, you will be able to sign up for a single semester (any number of courses) at the discounted, negotiated rate of \$25, using the “join code” for this class: **089049**. (For what it’s worth, Top Hat is being used in some other BU courses, including some courses in Biology, Computer Science, Chemistry, and Linguistics. You may wish instead to register for a full academic year.)
 - ◆ I recommend that you sign up for Top Hat *the day before* our first day of class. You will be entitled to a refund within 14 days of your activation. So, in the unlikely and unfortunate event that you decide to drop this course, you will be able to obtain a refund if you are still within this 14-day post-activation period. See <https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Refund-Policy-and-Request-Form> (If you have any trouble with such a refund request, please let me know!)
 - ◆ To prepare for your use of Top Hat, you are encouraged to visit the **Quick Start Guide** - <https://support.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide>. It provides a brief overview to get you up and running on the system. There is an orientation video here: <https://goo.gl/qsNk5E>.
 - ◆ There are then free apps to enable you to access your account:
 - For Apple (iPhone, iPad, etc.): <https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-iOS-App-Overview>
 - For an Android mobile device: <https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Android-App-Overview>
 - ◆ You will need—*for every class meeting*—a fully charged smartphone, laptop, or phone with wifi or data capabilities (preferably), or else the ability to send text messages.
 - ◆ Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, please contact the Top Hat Support Team directly by email (support@tophat.com), the Contact Support button on their website, the in-app support button, or phone (1-888-663-5491). If you do not receive satisfactory response from the support team, please let me know!
 - ◆ For the short video assignment, please be sure that you have pop-ups enabled in your browser. You will also be asked to make your microphone and camera accessible to the program when you launch that assignment.

Course Requirements

- ◆ **Regular attendance**—*required to pass the class*—and **class participation**, for both lecture and section meetings. Exams may include material covered exclusively in class or exclusively in the readings.
 - ◆ Top Hat will be used for exercises that involve your participation. Approximately 50% of the credit is for just participating; the other 50% of the scoring will be based on the correctness of your answers. There will be occasional short quizzes, which will be scored solely based on correctness, and there will be other participatory activities that do not involve right answers, and all that will be recorded is credit for participation.
 - ◆ Attendance will also be taken via Top Hat. At some point during each lecture, a 4-digit code will be posted briefly, and you will be asked to enter the code during that short time window to confirm your attendance. Attendance will also be taken in discussion sections; attendance in discussion sections is also not optional.
 - ◆ **Exceptional circumstances: excused absences**
 - (a) **Religious observance.** If you are unable to attend class because of religious observance, please submit email notification to Prof. Neidle, with a cc to your TA, at least a week in advance. Please look over the syllabus. If you anticipate a conflict, please this to their attention ASAP. If a religious conflict prevents you from submitting an assignment on the due date, you are invited to submit the assignment in advance.
 - (b) **In case of illness or other serious issues that may prevent your attending a class**, please contact Prof. Neidle by email in advance (or *as promptly after the class as possible*, depending on circumstances).
In such cases, you should make every effort to catch up with what you missed, by consulting materials posted to the online syllabus (handouts, copies of PowerPoint presentations when available, etc.), and come to office hours to ask any questions you may have.
 - ◆ **Unexcused absences.** Unless you provide timely email notification as specified in (a) or (b) above, your absence will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences will have an impact on your final grade, and more than 5 unexcused absences will put you in jeopardy of failing the course. (This is separate from the effect on your participation grade of not being able to participate as a result of an unexcused absence.)
- ◆ **Regular problem sets**
 - ◆ Homework must be turned in *by the beginning of class* on the due date. Please read the instructions carefully and answer the questions that were assigned. Please include your name, the date, and the assignment number at the top of each assignment, with your section number in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. Staple together multiple pages of a single assignment. Homework must be typed/printed, or written legibly. Please leave space in between lines. Do not hand in homework ripped from notebooks.
 - ◆ Please save a copy of anything you turn in, just in case it should go astray.
 - ◆ The lowest score will be dropped. Late homework will not be accepted. If you are unable to attend class, homework may be delivered to your Teaching Assistant *before class* on the date it is due. You can leave this in an envelope with your TF's name on it in room 120 of 621 Commonwealth Avenue. Alternatively, you may arrange to have another student turn in the assignment for you in class. You are advised not to miss any assignments unnecessarily (you can take advantage of the fact that the lowest score will be dropped for an emergency or extraordinary circumstance).
 - ◆ In alternation with homework assignments that are graded, "practice exercises" will be assigned. Even though these will not be collected, you should do them carefully and write out your answers completely. These will often be due on Fridays, so you will be able to go over them in discussion section. Answer keys will usually be provided by 5 pm the day before the practice assignments are due, so that you can correct your own work. Please make any corrections of your own prior work visibly, so that you will be able to see where you had difficulties. (Material from practice assignments is fair game for quizzes in subsequent classes.) **Please keep all homework, as well as practice exercises and exams, in your portfolio for this course, and bring that with you when you come to office hours for help**; see below.
 - ◆ All assignments will be available from learn.bu.edu. Homework due on Tuesdays will generally be available by the previous Friday. The practice exercises will rely on the assigned readings (whether or not particular material has already been covered in class), as well as material that may yet be covered later in the week; so you can start the problems once they are made available, but should incorporate useful information provided in lecture prior to the due date in order to complete the assignment.

NOTES:

- [1] In case of extended illness or other extraordinary long-term circumstance, contact Prof. Neidle ASAP to make appropriate arrangements.
- [2] Students are encouraged to work together on homework assignments; however, each student is required to write up the solutions independently.
 - What this means for homework problems is that, when you write up the assignment, you should have nothing in front of you but the assignment itself. If the group has worked together to solve the problem, an independent write-up does *not* mean copying the group's solution and handing it in separately. It means that you should, benefitting from your *recollection* of the discussion about the problem, start from the beginning and (re)generate the solution yourself, writing up the appropriate stages of the analysis as you go.
 - If you worked with others on the assignment, please state that and list their names at the top of the first page.
- ◆ **Maintaining a portfolio.** Please keep a folder or notebook with **all** of your work: homework assignments, practice exercises, exams, etc., arranged chronologically. This is a course requirement.
 - Whenever you come to meet with a TF or the professor, please always bring your entire portfolio.
 - You are also advised to keep all handouts and other course materials; these will be useful to review.
 - You will be asked to submit your portfolio for brief review one or more times during the semester; it will be evaluated for organization and completeness.
 - Your portfolio will enable the TF's and the professor to provide you with individualized assistance.

Grading

- ◆ **Recording of grades.** Homework and exam grades will be posted on the BU Blackboard Learn website. Please verify that everything has been recorded properly, and notify your TF **ASAP** if you discover any discrepancy.
- ◆ **Breakdown of the grade.**
 - **Attendance and Class Participation**

Note: Attendance in both lectures and discussion sections is mandatory; unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade, and you will not pass the class if you do not attend both the lectures and the discussion section meetings regularly. Missing classes will also adversely affect your participation grade, since you cannot participate if you aren't present, needless to say.

Attendance and participation in lectures and section meetings: 12%

9% Lectures: 3% Attendance; **6% Participation** - based on Top Hat responses: Daily Top Hat scores will generally be about 50% based on participation, 50% based on correctness (some questions will count for participation only, and there will also be occasional short quizzes, which will count only for correctness). Please disregard the Top Hat online "grade book" although you can review the Top Hat responses after class, or to review material, which may be helpful.

3% Sections – attendance plus participation (includes requirement to maintain a portfolio with all work from the course, which will be reviewed with your TF at the end of the semester)

- **Homework**

28 % Assignments (lowest grade dropped; no late homework accepted; in case of extraordinary circumstances, please contact the professor as soon as you can so we can make arrangements)

- **Exams**

30 % In-class exams (3 during the semester)

30 % Final exam (cumulative)

Grading standards

		88-89.99	B+	78-79.99	C+		
93 - 100.00	A	83-87.99	B	73-77.99	C	60-69.99	D
90 - 92.99	A-	80-82.99	B-	70-72.99	C-	< 60	F

Logistics

- ◆ **Readings.** It is essential that you do the assigned readings *prior to* the lecture indicated on the syllabus. Do these carefully. This will make your homework assignments substantially easier, and it will make your experience in the course much more interesting and rewarding. It won't hurt on exams either. Lectures present information to *supplement*, not reiterate, the contents of the readings. On occasion, we may use slightly different conventions in class from those that are used in the textbook. In such cases, the differences will be pointed out and you are expected to use the conventions from the lectures in lieu of those in the book.
- ◆ **Discussion sections.** Every student should be registered for a section. These sections provide you with a chance to review and practice in smaller groups material presented in lecture, and to ask any questions you may have. They are a valuable resource for you, and they are *not* optional.
- ◆ **Technology.** Please do not use laptop computers, phones, tablets, or other electronic devices during class *for any reason other than* Top Hat participation. Your attention should be directed at the PowerPoint presentations; lecture notes will be distributed. If you have concerns, please talk to Prof. Neidle. To understand the reasoning behind this policy, see:
 - "Why you should take notes by hand — not on a laptop," by Joseph Stromberg (6/4/2014): <http://www.vox.com/2014/6/4/5776804/note-taking-by-hand-versus-laptop>
 - "Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers," by F. Sana, T. Weston, and N. J. Cepeda, *Computers & Education* volume 56, pages 24-31, March 2013: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254>
- ◆ **Email.** Please be sure that your *BU email address* is working properly (and that it forwards to your email address of choice, if different). I will send out messages about the class through the Link, and that means that they will go to your BU address. If it is not working properly, you will miss these messages. **(This is important.)**
- ◆ **Time commitment.** In addition to the time spent in class, you should expect to spend about 5 hours a week on the assigned readings and homework assignments. The first priority should be careful reading of the assigned chapters, and you should set aside at least 2 hours for this each week. If you do the reading carefully, you will be in a very good position to answer the homework questions; however, if you try to take a shortcut by skipping the reading and focusing on the homework questions only, this will be an inefficient and wasteful use of your time, and will probably lead to frustration and unhappiness. Note: In some cases, conventions used in class may differ from what is in the textbook. In such cases, please follow the conventions in class for homework.

Other resources

The course website offers a wealth of information and **wonderful links** to linguistics resources. Check it out!

If you need help... ask !

If you are attending classes and doing the readings and still having difficulty with the material, you should take advantage of (free) tutoring services offered through the university (<http://www.bu.edu/erc/>) as well as the office hours of the teaching fellows and the professor. There is a huge advantage to resolving any difficulties right away, as the material in this course builds progressively on the concepts that are discussed.

Academic integrity

Students should be sure to read <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>. This is taken very seriously, and violations will be reported to the Dean's Office.

Copyright notice

All class materials are copyrighted and may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor. **Please note:** this means that no course materials distributed in conjunction with this course (in hard copy or electronically) may be shared with any note-sharing websites.

Tentative schedule; updates will be announced in class and posted on the class website

Week	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	[PAGES]	HW	*TO BE HANDED IN
1	1	9/3	Preliminaries & overview			
	2	9/5	Historical perspective and some key concepts	Read the syllabus carefully ☺ CHAPTER 1 CHAPTER 4 (§ 1)	[1-13] [121-129]	
		9/6				
2	3	9/10*	Morphology	CHAPTER 4 (§ 2 – 4.2)	[129-141]	*Assignment on Top Hat: Upload video recording briefly introducing yourself, pronouncing your name slowly and clearly ☺ [Note that pop-ups must be enabled in your browser. When asked, you will need to allow access to your microphone and camera.]
	4	9/12		CHAPTER 4 (§ 4.3 – 5)	[141-150]	
		9/13				[Practice #1: Morphology]
		9/16	<i>Optional special event:</i> Linguistics Colloquium, Nicole Holliday, “How black should a black president sound? Sociophonetic variation in the speech of Barack Obama” STO B50 (675 Commonwealth Ave.)			
3	5	9/17*	Phonetics (consonants)	CHAPTER 2 (§ 1 - 5)	[17-38]	#HW 1*: Morphology
	6	9/19	Phonetics (vowels)	CHAPTER 2 (§ 6 - 7)	[39-44]	
		9/20				[Practice #2: Phonetics]
4	7	9/24*	Phonology	CHAPTER 3 (§ 1-1.7, 3.1)	[69-79, 91-93]	#HW 2*: Phonetics
	8	9/26		CHAPTER 3 (§ 4, APPENDIX)	[102-110]	
		9/27				[Practice #3: Phonology 1]
5	9	10/1*	Phonology (cont.)	CHAPTER 2 (§ 8.1-9.3; APPENDIX)	[45-61]	#HW 3*: Phonology
	10	10/3	Syllables, Rhythm, Stress	CHAPTER 3 (§ 2-2.6)	[79-91]	
		10/4				[Practice #4: Phonology 2]
6	11	10/8	American Sign Language	CHAPTER AVAILABLE ONLINE* : “Natural Sign Languages,” sections on Phonology & Morphology		 Video available online
	12	10/10	Exam #1 [bring your Top Hat device, sharpened pencils, and eraser]			
		10/11				

7		10/15	No class: Monday at BU		
	13	10/17	Syntax – introduction [Attending the syntax lectures is critical; material will not be available in any other way!] <i>For homework assignments, follow conventions used in class where they differ from the textbook.</i>		
		10/18			[Practice #5: Syntax 1]
8	14	10/22	Syntax	CHAPTER 5 (§ 0-1.3) [167-176]	[Practice #6: Syntax 2]
	15	10/24*		CHAPTER 5 (§ 1.4-4) [176-198]	#HW 4*: Syntax 1
		10/25			[Practice #7: Syntax 3]
	16	10/29*	Syntax (continued)	CHAPTER 5 (§ 5.1-5.3) [198-206] CHAPTER 5 APPENDIX [207-210]	#HW 5*: Syntax 2 A-C, odd numbers only
9	17	10/31*	Syntax and semantics	CHAPTER 6 (§ 1-3) [217-245] Concentrate on these sections: pp. 217-224 (up to the heading "Componential Analysis"); p. 237 "Verb meaning & subcategorization"	#HW 6*: Syntax 3 A-C, even numbers only, plus D
		11/1			[Practice #8: Syntax 4]
10	18	11/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantics • Pragmatics • ASL revisited 	CHAPTER 6 (§ 4) [245-252]	
	19	11/7	Exam #2: Syntax [bring your Top Hat device, sharpened pencils, and eraser]		
			No section meetings on 11/8  Please watch <i>American Tongues</i> : https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4jrdic		

		11/11	<i>Optional special event:</i> Linguistics Colloquium, Harold Torrence, Title TBA LAW Auditorium (767 Commonwealth Ave.)		
11	20	11/12*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociolinguistics Language variation African American Vernacular English 	CHAPTER 13 (§ 1-4) [483-501] CHAPTER 13 (§ 6-8) [508-526]	#HW 7*: Semantics Sociolinguistics Questionnaire: The questionnaire and Excel template for the answer sheet are available from the "additional materials" section of our Blackboard Learn site. Your complete Excel file should be submitted through that site by 9 AM on 11/19.
	21	11/14	 <i>Talking Black in America</i>	CHAPTER 8 (§ 1-6) [297-328]	See information on Blackboard Learn about viewing this movie.
		11/15			
12	22	11/19*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language change Writing systems Written vs. spoken language 	CHAPTER 8 (§ 7-8) [329-339] CHAPTER 14 (§ 1-6) [531-556]	#HW 8*: Sociolinguistics The questionnaire and Excel template for the answer sheet are available from the "additional materials" section of our Blackboard Learn site. Your complete Excel file should be submitted through that site by 9 AM on 11/19.
	23	11/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of biology Nature vs. nurture Critical period hypothesis Modularity 	CHAPTER 9 [347-384] CHAPTER 10 (<i>optional</i>)	
		11/22*	#HW 9*: Historical linguistics		
13	24	11/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human language capacity Animal "language" Language contact Pidgins and Creoles 	CHAPTER 13 (§ 5) [501-507] CHAPTER AVAILABLE ONLINE* : "Animal Communication" (<i>optional</i>)	 View online: https://topdocumentaryfilms.com/genie-secret-wild-child/
		11/28	No class: Thanksgiving		
		11/29	No class: Thanksgiving		
14	25	12/3	Exam #3 [<i>emphasis on historical linguistics; bring your Top Hat device, sharpened pencils, and eraser</i>]		
	26	12/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and the brain Aphasia Psycholinguistics 	CHAPTER 12 [455-479]	 <i>Aphasia</i> : Video available online
		12/6	[Practice #9: Review exercises]		
15	27	12/10	Review		

* Note that assignments are due on these dates.

Cumulative Final Exam: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 3-5 pm