

Introduction to Linguistics –1

Linguistics 20100/30100, Fall 2002

TuTh 1:30-2:50 pm
Cobb 102

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Course description

This course is the first quarter of a three-quarter introductory survey of methods, findings, and problems in all major areas of modern linguistics. In this quarter, we introduce basic notions of language competence and the notion of a scientific approach to the questions of language, its biological basis, and its realization in human minds/brains. We concentrate on aspects of form and meaning: syntax (the study of word and phrase formation) and semantics (the study of meaning and its composition). We examine these by an close examination of syntactic and semantic structure in a variety of languages and what is known about their acquisition.

Prerequisites

There are no official prerequisites to enrollment in this course; this course presupposes no background in linguistics. We will develop certain notational technologies to allow us to formalize our observations as needed.

Course requirements

- Attendance and participation in the class
- Weekly assignments: exercises and the occasional quiz
- Final exam

The final grade will be an average of all grades received on assignments plus participation (worth one assignment) and the final exam (worth three assignments)

Schedule

Roughly, we will be covering one chapter per week, subject to refinement. With the exception of today, you should have read chapter $n+1$ by the beginning of week n . At the end of class Thursday, I will announce which of the exercises are to be done, and these should be handed in at the beginning of class on Tuesday; because we will generally discuss the solutions in class, **late homeworks cannot be accepted**. We will do our best to correct them and return them to you at the following class.

Readings

We will be reading and discussing throughout this course. Both the required text and the optional text are available at the Seminary Coop. Additional articles and chapters of various books may be announced and put on reserve at Regenstein as the need arises.

Required text

Fromkin, Victoria A. (ed.). 2000. *Linguistics: An introduction to linguistic theory*. Blackwell: Malden, Mass.

Optional text

Jackendoff, Ray. 1994. *Patterns in the mind: Language and human nature*. Basic Books: New York.

Other texts you may find useful

(To be read at your leisure as necessary. These are available at the Regenstein or at any fine bookstore.)

Bloomfield, Leonard. 1933. *Language*. This is still a classic introductory overview of many aspects of language(s), by one of the greatest thinkers in the field, once a faculty member here at the University of Chicago.

McCawley, James. 1998. *The syntactic phenomena of English, 2nd ed.* U of Chicago Press: Chicago. A fantastic sourcebook on English syntax: the best and most comprehensive such book ever to appear. Also by a U of Chicago professor.

Newmeyer, Frederick (ed.). 1988. *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey (4 volumes)* A more technical encyclopedia with chapters on almost every major aspect of the field, written by leaders in the various areas. Not by a U of Chicago professor, though.