

**Introduction to Language Study
Course Syllabus
Spring 2012**

Course:	281	Section:	1
Time:	2:15-3:30 PM MW	Room:	HE 204
Instructor:	Mark Lencho	Office:	HE 415
Office Phone:	262-472-5062		
Office Hours:	11:30-12:30 PM MW and by appointment		
E-mail:	lenchom@uww.edu		
Virtual Office Door:	http://facstaff.uww.edu/lenchom (Google "Lencho's Front Door")		
Class Web site:	Click on "D2L" from the list of choices on the UWW homepage: http://www.uww.edu		
Prerequisites:	ENG 101 and ENG 102 or ENG 162 or instructor's consent		

Course Content:

How do we learn language so quickly, so well as small children when other smart animals (like chimpanzees) are so limited in their language skills? Why are there some things about language (like the difference between "to lay" and "to lie") that are so simple compared to other things we learn, but which resist penetrating the heads of the great majority of us that use English every day?

The subject of this course is language, its nature, its origins, how it is acquired and used, how it has changed through time, and how it varies regionally, socially, and stylistically. Successfully completing the course, you will learn principles and rules which underscore our great competence in some areas and woeful lack of ability in others and according to which our language works. For those wishing not only to understand their own language but to be able to help others to a similar understanding, the knowledge and skills gained in this course will help refine, orient, and focus these goals.

Aim of the course:

By the end of the semester, a student doing "A" quality work will have mastered set of proficiencies which are basic to linguistic investigation, including the ability to use and understand core linguistic vocabulary, identify the constituent structure of linguistic units, transcribe written and spoken English, identify and distinguish social and regional dialects. Additionally, the "A" student will need to employ the analytic procedure characteristic of work in linguistics. That is, she should be able to extract generalizations from relevant phenomena and express them as testable statements. Finally, she will be able to display a set of understandings about language so as not to confuse language change with decay, non-standard dialects with ignorance, doublespeak with sophistication, nor language acquisition with literacy.

As a way to succeed in reaching the above aims, I propose the following class structure as outlined in the weekly course calendar (see below).

Course Texts:

You will need two texts for this class: **Language: Introductory Readings** Seventh Ed. (Clark et al. 2008) is available from the textbook rental at the University Bookstore. I will distribute the second text, ***Linguistics for Non-Linguists: A Primer with Exercises*** Fourth Ed. (Parker and Riley 2005), in class.

Student Participation:

You will be responsible for daily class participation, and will be evaluated according to whether you have been **enlarging** (5), **contributing** (4), **working** (3) **active** (2), **present** (1), or **absent** (0). An unexcused late arrival to class or an early departure will incur a grade deduction from your class participation score for the week, regardless of the quality of your participation.

Enlarging: You make in-class comments and/or discussion board postings that engage the material in such a way as to demonstrate understanding of the material to such a degree that you can actively explore its hidden implications and suggest its applications. Additionally, you have prepared accurately reasoned responses to the day's assigned exercises. You come to class with the textbook and a downloaded copy of the day's agenda. And you take notes.

Contributing: You make in-class comments and/or discussion board postings that engage the reading material in a way that makes it clear that you have some understanding of it. You answer correctly practice exercises. You come to class with the textbook and a downloaded copy of the day's agenda.

Working: You make in-class comments and/or discussion board postings that show that you have read at least some of the assigned reading. You respond to

the practice exercises. You come to class with the textbook and a downloaded copy of the day's agenda.

Active: You make in-class comments and/or discussion board postings which could have been made without reading the assigned material.

Present: You ask no questions, nor do you make any comments, but you do pay attention to the discussion.

Absent: You do not show up, or you show up, but seem to fail to pay attention to class activity.

You will be enrolled onto an on-line discussion forum for our class, which will give you the opportunity to share questions and comments over the reading material with other class members on the computer. Credit for on-line work will be tabulated along with your weekly class participation scores, as our on-line site will constitute our virtual extended classroom. Simply make a posting no later than **midnight Saturday**, and I will read and evaluate it as if it were made in class during that week, allowing you to further bolster your class participation score. . **NOTE, HOWEVER: To get credit for class participation, you must come to class. You should not think of your activity on the electronic discussion board as a substitute for class attendance.** If a medical or transportation emergency arises which prevents you from meeting a deadline or attending class, you must notify me and make arrangements for make-up prior to the meeting of the next class period. Coming to class late, leaving early, any cell phone activity during class, or being absent from class apart from a medical or transportation emergency or an excused school function will incur a two point deduction from your weekly class participation score for each infraction, regardless of the quality of your participation (you will get one warning before I make subtractions from your participation score). If you miss both classes during a week, you will receive a zero for class participation.

The on-line discussion forum will be one resource among many in a full-scale web version of this course. At our website, you will also find things such as a course calendar, assignments, reference materials, quizzes, and a grade book. The web environment for our class is called "Desire2Learn (D2L)." When you go to our website, D2L will prompt you for a "username" and "password." Your "username" is your campus email name (first 8 characters last name + first initial + middle initial + day of birth), and your password is your 7digit UWW ID.

Course Organization and Workload:

Routinely, class time will involve us all in discussion, guided primarily by the readings and practice quizzes in our textbook and also by our shared interests.

There will be weekly on-line quizzes, as well as a midterm examination and a final examination, all of which will be objective, multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank formats. The opportunity to develop a formal project will permit you to explore more creative problem-solving adventures in linguistics.

Assessment Policies:

Semester grades will be determined by the following formula, based on the principle of rewarding one for what one does well:

Examinations: (midterm and final, 50 pts each, 100 points total)

Quizzes: (10 highest scores, 10 pts each, 100 points total)

Project: (up to 25 points)

Class Participation: (average of 15 grades, 75 points total)

Point totals will be converted into grades according to the following formula (essentially 90%A, 80%B, 70%C, 60%D) with approximately 50 points as extra credit. That is, it is possible to earn as much as 300 points in the class, though your grade will be based on a percentage of 250 points.

A+ above 250 pts.

A 238-250

A- 225-237

B+ 217-224

B 208-216

B- 200-207

C+ 192-199

C 183-191

C- 175-182

D+ 167-174

D 158-166

D- 150-157

Additional Miscellaneous Policies:

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater guidelines require the following policy statements be attached to all course syllabi:

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding special Accommodations, Misconduct, Religious Beliefs

Accommodation, Discrimination and Absence for University sponsored Events. (For details please refer to the undergraduate and graduate Timetables; the Rights and Responsibilities section of the Undergraduate Bulletin; the Academic Requirements and Policies and the Facilities and Services sections of the Graduate bulletin; and the Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures [UWS Chapter 14]; and the Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures [UWS Chapter 17])

Course Calendar:

Parenthetical items should be prepared for the date under which they are listed.

Week 1

1/18 Introduction: Taking Stock

Week 2

Demonstrating an awareness of the dual function of language (language allows us to do things as well as say things; through it we reflect social relationships in the process of communicating our thoughts) students should be to state (i) the conditions under which an utterance is appropriate, (ii) differences between how language means and how it is used, (iii) strategies used to mediate between meaning and use.

1/23 Rules and Principles—Nature of Linguistics (Read syllabus; Parker/Riley Chap 1; Agenda 1; Quiz 0)

1/25 Pragmatics: (Read Parker/Riley Chapter 2; Agenda 2; Rules and Principles, Quiz 1)

Week 3

1/30 Pragmatics: Performatives (Agenda 3)

2/1 Pragmatics: Implicature (Agenda 4)

Week 4

Students should be able to identify (i) semantic relationships pertaining to word sense and reference, and (ii) semantic relationships pertaining to logical properties of sentences. Furthermore, students should be able to give a rudimentary description of the relationship between sentence meaning and sentence structure.

2/6 Pragmatics: Politeness (Pragmatics Quiz 2)

2/8 Semantics: (Read P/R Chap 3; Pragmatics Quiz 3)

Week 5

2/13 Semantics: Word sense (Agenda 6)

2/15 Semantics: Reference (Agenda 7; Semantics Quiz 4)

Week 6

Students should be able to state conditions under which a sentence is grammatical, distinguishing between constitutive rules of linguistic investigation and regulative rules of traditional prescriptive grammars; they should also be able to indicate the basis by which (i) a word is assigned to a particular syntactic category, (ii) a word or phrase is determined to be a constituent, and (iii) sentences or phrases are related by means of transformations.

2/20 Semantics: Truth (Agenda 8)

2/22 Syntax: (Read P/R Chapter 4; Semantics Quiz 5)

Week 7

2/27 Syntax: Major Parts of Speech (Agenda for Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs)

2/29 Syntax: Minor Parts of Speech (Agenda for Articles, Auxiliaries, Miscellaneous Categories)

Week 8

3/5 Syntax: Phrases (Agenda for NP's, PP's, and VP's etc)

3/7 Syntax: Clauses (Agenda for Phrases and Clauses, Clause Structure, Clause Patterns, Subordinate Clauses)

Week 9

3/12 Syntax: Transformations (Agenda for Transformations)

3/14 Syntax: Generative Grammar (Agenda for Generative Grammar; Syntax Quiz 6)

Week 10

Students should be able to indicate the morphemic structure of words, distinguishing between lexical/grammatical and free/bound morphemes, inflectional vs. derivational affixes.

3/19 **Midterm Examination:** Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics

3/21 Morphology (Read P/R Chapter 5; **Formal Project Plan Sheet Submission**)

Week 11

4/2 Morphology: Terminology (Agenda on Terminology)

4/4 Morphology: Affixes (Agenda on Derivational and Inflectional Affixation; Morphology Quiz 7)

Week 12

Students should be able to describe (i) the phonemes of English by place and manner of articulation, and (ii) the basis by which a sound is determined to be linguistically significant in a way that demonstrates a recognition of the different levels of phonological representation. Also, they should be able to give reasons for classifying phonemes in terms of their distinctive features.

4/9 Morphology: Word Formation (Agenda on Word Formation; Quiz 8)

4/11 Phonology (Read P/R Chapter 6; Agenda for Articulatory Phonetic Transcription)

Week 13

4/16 Phonology: Levels of Representations (Agenda; **Formal Project Submission Deadline**)

4/18 Phonology: Suprasegmentals (Agenda for Suprasegmental structure, Quiz 9)

Week 14

Students should be able to identify the characteristic lexical, phonological, and syntactic features (i) which distinguish the main varieties of American English and (ii) which indicate the formality of language in a given context. Also, they should be able to explain both the socio-political and the linguistic basis for the distinction between "standard" and "non-standard" English and between "good"

and "bad" English. Students should be able to give some account of the structural development of English over time, and identify the structural features associated with each period in the history of English.

4/23 Variation (Read P/R Chapter 7; Agenda)

4/25 Variation: Social and Regional Variables

Week 15

Students should be able to identify (i) a chronology of the stages we go through in acquiring our syntax, (ii) the order in which inflectional affixes are mastered, and (iii) the general order in which phonemes are mastered. Students should also be able to summarize and contrast behaviorist and nativist accounts of how it is that humans have the capacity to acquire a language.

4/30 Acquisition (Read P/R Chapter 8; Agenda; Variation Quiz 10)

5/2 Film: Child language Acquisition

Week 16

12/21 7:45-9:45 AM: **Final examination:** comprehensive, chapters 1-8.