

Course: LIN 207 Language, Society, and the Individual
Semester: Fall 2015
Instructor: Bohnemeyer
Text: Bonvillain ⁵2007 (or ⁶2010 or ⁷2013)

Overview: Language is the most important “interface” between any one human being’s mind and the minds of other people. A number of subdisciplines of linguistics, psychology, sociology, and anthropology are dedicated to the study of how language is used to convey messages from mind to mind; in particular: neurolinguistics – the study of how language is supported by the brain; psycholinguistics – the study of how utterances are processed in the mind/brain; language acquisition research – the study of how languages are learned; sociolinguistics – the study of the social determinants of language variation and change; and linguistic anthropology – the study of the cultural embedding of linguistic practice. This course is designed to provide a first acquaintance with these various fields of study. The main emphasis will be on the social and cultural aspects of language use.

Lecture: M/W/F 1-1:50 in 101 Baldy
Instructor: Dr. Jürgen Bohnemeyer – Office 642 Baldy Phone 645-0127
E-mail jb77@buffalo.edu
Office hours M/W 3:30-4:30pm; F by appointment
Grad. TA: Anastasia Stepanova – Office 444 Phone TBA
Office hours Tr/Th 11-12
E-mail astepano@buffalo.edu
UTA: Rachel Boerschig – Office hours M/W 10-11am in the Garvin Library
E-mail rmboersc@buffalo.edu

Reading: Bonvillain ⁵2007 (or ⁶2010 or ⁷2013) (required); six chapters from other books will be made available through UBlerns – readings *must* be completed prior to the lecture for which they are assigned!

Assessment: There will be six **homework assignments**, six **in-class exercises** to be completed in group work, a **mid-term exam** and a **final exam**. HW assignments consist of problem sets and will be graded according to the number of points you score on the solution to each problem. In-class exercises consist of similar problem sets, but will not be graded – only your participation will be recorded. The mid-term and final exams are take-home exams consisting entirely of problem sets of a kind that have already occurred in hw assignments and in-class exercises. Essentially, you get questions you’ve seen before, but wrt. to new data sets. So your preparation should focus on reviewing the assignments and exercises and making sure you know (a) how to solve the problems and (b) *why* the way to solve a particular type of problem is the way to solve that type of problem.

Overall grades compute as follows:

- Best five hw assignments – 50%
- Participation during in-class exercises – 20%¹

¹ Unexcused absences from class can cause a reduction of the participation grade in the aggregate. Attendance is taken during every class. To excuse your absence from a class, email

- Midterm exam – 15%
- Final exam – 15%

Learning outcomes: The following table identifies the intended learning goals of the course and maps them to the instruments that will be used for the assessment of the students’ success. **Keep in mind, however, that all of these assessment instruments are designed not only to test attainment of the learning goals, but simultaneously also to solidify, enhance, and refine them.** The program goals referenced in the table are stated in an appendix to this syllabus.

Part of the course	stage	Outcomes	Program goals covered
I: Structural linguistics – languages as semiotic systems (weeks 1-5)	1 (HW #1 and Midterm exam)	Learn to classify linguistic and nonlinguistic signs according to their semiotic properties; develop an understanding of the semiotic properties that distinguish natural languages from other semiotic systems; learn the basics of the phonetic properties according to which speech sounds are classified and transcribed.	Core concepts; Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Problem solving
	2 (HW #2 and Midterm exam)	Learn the basics of morphological and syntactic analysis, i.e., to analyze words and sentences in terms of the internal structure according to which they are built up from meaningful constituent elements; learn how to identify and classify different types of figurative meanings and develop an understanding of the underlying processes of semantic and conceptual transfer.	Core concepts; Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Problem solving

the instructor – in advance, unless you are prevented from doing so by unforeseen circumstances – with a valid reason for your absence. A pattern of multiple unexcused absences reduces the participation grade by a full grade. Six or more unexcused absences result in an F on participation.

<p>II: Language and the mind-brain –psychological and neurological aspects of language and speech (weeks 6-10)</p>	<p>1 (HW #3 and Midterm exam)</p>	<p>Develop an awareness for how languages differ from one another in terms of how they represent and frame reality and what they have in common in this respect; develop an understanding of the typology of color terminologies in the world’s languages, by learning to classify fictional color terminologies in terms of whether or not they conform to the predictions of Berlin & Kay 1969 and Kay 1975; learn to classify spatial frames of reference and develop an appreciation of the cognitive impact of selecting one type of frame as opposed to another to express a given spatial meaning.</p>	<p>Language diversity awareness; Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Problem solving; Critical thinking</p>
	<p>2 (HW #3-4 and Final exam)</p>	<p>Learn to determine which speech sounds a young child has (not yet) mastered and how to explain the developmental sequence; learn to classify and explain speech errors; learn the basics of diagnosing different types of aphasic disorders.</p>	<p>Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Problem solving; Critical thinking; Life skills</p>
<p>III: Using language – the social and interactional dimensions of language (weeks 11-15)</p>	<p>1 (HW #5 and Final exam)</p>	<p>Learn to identify and classify speech acts; learn to identify and explain mismatches between speech acts and the syntactic sentence types used to perform them; learn to classify strategies of expressing politeness and to analyze and explain their use and misuse.</p>	<p>Problem solving; Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Life skills; Language diversity awareness</p>
	<p>2 (HW #6 and Final exam)</p>	<p>Learn to analyze variation in language use across speakers (e.g., in how they pronounce certain sounds) in terms of the speakers’ membership in particular social groups; develop an understanding of how <i>register</i> (the distinction between colloquial speech, formal speech, jargon, slang, etc.) interacts with this variation; learn how</p>	<p>Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language; Life skills; Critical thinking</p>

		different theories of the origin of creole languages explain different kinds of data.	
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Nearly paperless class: Lecture notes will be posted on UBlerns/Course Documents two hours ahead of class. Additional readings will be posted on UBlerns/Course Documents two days ahead of class. Home works and exams will be administered as online through UBlerns/Assignments. Online the in-class exercises will be distributed in printout form.

Outline

(Readings marked with an asterisk can be downloaded from UBlerns. Note that the pages designated for preparatory reading below may be less than the entire chapter!)

Part I: I: Structural linguistics – languages as semiotic systems

Week 1: Introduction; Properties of language

Mo Aug 31	<i>Introduction and overview</i>	Reading: Bonvillain ch. 1
We Sep 02	<i>Properties of language</i>	Reading: *Hockett 1958: 569-580
Fr Sep 04	<i>Language as a mental phenomenon</i>	Reading: *Jackendoff 1994: 8-20

Week 2: The form of the message

Mo Sep 07	*** Labor Day ***	
We Sep 09	<i>Phonetics</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 7-13 ² (5 th pp. 7-13, 7 th pp. 7-12)
Fr Sep 11	<i>Phonemic analysis; prosodic features</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 13-16 (5 th pp. 13-16, 7 th pp. 12-14)

Week 3: The form of the message (cont.)

Mo Sep 14	IN-CLASS EXERCISE #1!	HW #1 out!
We Sep 16	<i>Morphology: The structure of words</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 17-24 (5 th pp. 17-24, 7 th pp. 14-20)
Fr Sep 18	<i>Syntax: The structure of sentences</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 24-27 (5 th pp. 24-27, 7 th pp. 20-24)

Week 4: Meaning in language

Mo Sep 21	<i>Semantics</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 27-29 (5 th pp. 27-29, 7 th pp. 24-25)	HW #1 due!
We Sep 23	<i>Extended and transferred meaning</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 68-76 (5 th 72-76, 7 th pp. 64-69)	
Fr Sep 25	IN-CLASS EXERCISE #2!		HW #2 out!

Week 5: Language and cognition

Mo Sep 28	<i>The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 46-51 (5 th 43-48, 7 th pp. 38-46)
We Sep 30	<i>Cognitive Anthropology: color terms</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 58-68 (5 th 57-72, 7 th pp. 51-64)

² The page numbers refer to the 4th edition. Corresponding page numbers for the 5th and 7th edition are added in parentheses.

Fr Oct 02 *Cognitive Anthropology: space* **Reading:** *Levinson pp. 109-123 **HW #2 due!**

Week 6: Language acquisition

Mo Oct 05 *The puzzles of language acquisition* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 241-243
(5th pp. 246-248, 7th pp. 152-155)

We Oct 07 *First utterances* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 245-251; 262-266
(5th pp. 248-254; 267-272, 7th pp. 156-161, 170-174)

Fr Oct 09 **IN-CLASS EXERCISE #3!** **HW #3 out!**

Week 7: Language acquisition (cont.); Language processing

Mo Oct 12 *Learning word meanings* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 243-244; 251-253
(5th pp. 249-250, 256-258, 7th pp. 155-156, 161-162)

We Oct 14 *Speech perception* **Reading:** *[RABCS] pp. 120-125

Fr Oct 16 *Speech production* **Reading:** *[RABCS] pp. 125-133 **HW #3 due!**

Midterm exam out!

Week 8: Language and brain

Mo Oct 19 *Language and the brain* **Reading:** *[ADFH] pp. 501-520

We Oct 21 *Language and the brain (cont.)* **Reading:** *[ADFH] pp. 521-530

Fr Oct 23 **IN-CLASS EXERCISE #4!** **HW #4 out!**

Midterm exam due!

Week 9: Using language

Mo Oct 26 *Speech acts and speech events* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 76-81; 92-94
(5th pp. 79-84, 94-96, 7th pp. 70-74, 84-85)

We Oct 28 *Conversation analysis* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 111-116
(5th pp. 114-119, 7th pp. 102-107)

Fr Oct 30 *Implicatures* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 116-119
(5th pp. 119-122, 7th pp. 107-109) **HW #4 due!**

Week 10: Using language (cont.)

Mo Nov 02 *Politeness: Terms of address* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 83-87; 126-129
(5th pp. 84-88; 133-136, 7th pp. 75-80, 115-119)

We Nov 04 *Politeness: Face and redress* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 129-134
(5th pp. 137-140, 7th pp. 119-122)

Fr Nov 06 **IN-CLASS EXERCISE #5!** **HW #5 out!**

Week 11: Sociolinguistics

Mo Nov 09 *Social stratification and language use* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 140-150; 157-159
(5th pp. 146-156, 161-164, 7th pp. 205-214, 218-221)

We Nov 11 *Pidgin and Creole languages* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 325-332
(5th pp. 336-342, 7th pp. 307-313)

Fr Nov 13 *African American Vernacular English* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 159-164;
(5th pp. 164-169, 7th pp. 221-225) **HW #5 due!**
171-173 (5th pp. 177-179, 7th pp. 231-234)

Week 12: Language and gender

Mo Nov 16 *The sociolinguistic approach* **Reading:** Bonvillain pp. 181-189

We Nov 18	<i>The ethnographic approach</i>	(5 th pp. 186-193, 7 th pp. 240-247) Reading: Bonvillain pp. 222-234
Fr Nov 20	<i>The conversation-analytical approach</i>	(5 th pp. 227-238, 7 th pp. 253-266) Reading: Bonvillain pp. 196-205 (5 th pp. 200-210, 7 th pp.253-262)

Week 13: Language and gender (cont.)

Mo Nov 23	IN-CLASS EXERCISE #6!	HW #6 out!
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*** FALL RECESS We Nov 25 till Sa Nov 28 ***

Week 14: Multilingualism

Mo Nov 30	<i>Multilingual nations: India</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 298-306 (5 th pp. 306-313, 7 th pp. 282-289)
We Dec 02	<i>Multilingual nations: USA</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 316-325 (5 th pp. 323-336, 7 th pp. 297-307)
Fr Dec 04	<i>Bilingual communities</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 336-347 (5 th pp. 346-359, 7 th pp. 316-330) HW #6 due!

Week 15: Multilingualism (cont.)

Mo Dec 07	<i>Code switching</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 355-366 (5 th pp. 368-381, 7 th pp. 340-350)
We Dec 09	Discussion of the Final	Final exam out!
Fr Dec 11	<i>Endangered languages</i>	Reading: Bonvillain pp. 347-354 (5 th pp. 359-368, 7 th pp. 330-340)

Fr Dec 18		Final exam due
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Bibliography

- [ADFH] Akmajian, A., Demers, R. A., Farmer, A. K., and R. M. Harnish (1995). *Linguistics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bonvillain, N. (2007 [1997]). *Language, culture, and communication*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hockett, C. F. (1958). *A course in modern linguistics*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Jackendoff, R. (1994). *Patterns in the mind*. New York, NY: BasicBooks.
- Majid, A., Bowerman, M., Kita, S., Haun, D., & Levinson, S. (2004). Can language restructure cognition? The case for space. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 8(3): 108–114.
- [RABCS] Radford, A., Atkinson, M., Britain, D., Clahsen, H., and A. Spencer (1999). *Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix: Undergraduate Program Learning Outcomes

1. Core concepts

Students will comprehend the core concepts of linguistics (including ones those in phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, or semantics), as well as the basic literature that assumes such concepts.

2. Grasp of cognitive/social aspects of language

Students will achieve an awareness of language in its broader cognitive and social context.

3. Language diversity awareness

Students will develop an awareness of linguistic diversity and variability.

4. Critical thinking

Students will master the ability to construct arguments for choosing between alternative analyses of linguistic phenomena and to identify relevant data bearing on the analyses.

5. Problem solving

Students will be able to analyze linguistic data from English or other languages and to construct descriptions of particular linguistic phenomena in particular languages.

6. Data collection

Students will be able to develop basic collection and analysis skills.

7. Communication skills

Students will attain the skills necessary to prepare written and oral presentations on linguistic topics.

8. Life skills

Students will comprehend and appreciate cultural differences among speakers of different languages, be capable of applying the analytic skills acquired through the study of linguistics to other areas of life, and ascertain the importance of language in human endeavors.