SPRING 2009
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NOTE: Students are advised that the following descriptions are specific to the semester indicated, and are meant to supplement, not replace, the general course descriptions given in the General and Graduate Information Catalog and reproduced in our Program Description.

Ling 100—Language in Hawai‘i and the Pacific
(Paul Lassettre)

Linguistics 100: Language in Hawai‘i and the Pacific offers students an opportunity to investigate the workings of human language with reference to the languages spoken in Hawai‘i and the Pacific. Students taking this course will become familiar with a wide range of issues—historical, sociological, psychological, political, and cultural—relating to language in Hawai‘i and the broader Pacific region, including Asia.

Ling 102—Introduction to the Study of Language
(Paul Lassettre)

Linguistics 102 offers an introduction to language—how it is used, how it is acquired, how it changes over time, how it is patterned, how it is represented in the brain. You’ll learn about the major concerns, methods, and discoveries of this exciting field. The course begins with a survey of modern linguistics, and goes on to cover such topics as language and the human species, formal linguistics, applied linguistics, and how languages are related in time and space.

Ling 102(8)—Introduction to the Study of Language
(Benjamin Bergen)

This course is an uncensored introduction to the study of language. It addresses all the topics covered in introductory linguistics courses, including how people learn language, how language changes over time, how people construct words and sentences, what psychological processes underlie language use, and how social group adherence affects language. But it does so using examples of language as it’s actually used, including slang, jargon, and especially taboo language.

It turns out that there’s a lot you can learn about how language works when you look at its dark underbelly. For instance, we’ll look at what’s happening in the brain when people swear intentionally or unintentionally (as in Tourette Syndrome) because this tells us a lot about how the brain stores language. Or take language change. No study of why words change their meanings would be complete without considering how social taboos affect people’s choice of words - consider why 'cock' is now only infrequently used to refer to a rooster and 'gay' only rarely means 'happy.'

There are no course prerequisites, but students who believe they could be offended by the study of taboo language might not find this course to be of appropriate for them. Interested students should contact the instructor for course entry.

Ling 320—General Linguistics
(Gregory Lee)

How grammars describe languages?

Ling 410—Articulatory Phonetics
(Patricia Donegan)

This course includes intensive training in the recognition, reproduction, and transcription of human speech sounds in preparation for phonological analysis, for field work with unrecorded languages, and for clinical work in speech pathology. An important goal of this course is to train students to hear speech sounds objectively, in a more language-independent way than speakers usually hear them.

Students will learn about the mechanisms humans use to produce speech sounds, and they will master vocabulary to describe these sounds. By the end of the course, students will be capable of describing the production of a wide variety of speech sounds. They should also be adept at transcribing English, and they will have some experience transcribing and producing the sounds of other languages. Grades will be based on homework, quizzes, a midterm, and a final project.

Ling 420—Morphology
(John Kupchik)

The objectives of this course are a) to familiarize the student with morphological analysis and b) to provide a theoretical background to improve the student’s skills in data analysis. We will examine a wide variety of morphological phenomena and some traditional approaches to morphology. The topics discussed include the definition of word, allomorphy, affixation, clitics, case systems, inflection, derivation, paradigms, productivity, compounding, incorporation, polysynthesis, morphotactics, consonant gradation, rhythmic gradation, reduplication, and morphological typology. Examples are cited from a wide range of languages including English, Tongan, Japanese, Hachijo, Western Old Japanese, Eastern Old Japanese, Classical Japanese, Okinawan, Finnish, Mari, Saamic, Nganasan, Nenets, Middle Korean, Old Korean, Old Chinese, Taiwanese, Ainu, and Mansi. Familiarity with syntactic and
phonological terminology is assumed. It is recommended that students should take LING 421 and LING 422 courses before taking this course to make the most of it.

Prerequisites: LING 320 or consent of the instructor. LING 421 and LING 422 recommended.

Requirements: Homework 40%, Midterm Exams 20% (2 x 10%), Participation & Preparation 10%, Term Paper 20%, Presentation of Term Paper 10%

Ling 421—Introduction to Phonological Analysis (Patricia Donegan)

This course is designed to enable the student to master the basic principles of phonological analysis through readings, lectures, and hands-on experience with data. Major topics to be covered include phonological and phonetic representation, phonological features, syllable and word structure, and accent and rhythm. We will consider a wide variety of phonological rules or processes – their forms, kinds and interactions, and we will look at constraints as an alternative to processes as determiners of phonological forms.

Requirements: Grades will be based on one or two midterm exams, a final exam, a series of written exercises, and a short project.

Ling 430—Animal Communication (Patricia Lee)

This course examines the ways in which animals communicate and how such systems differ from human language. Among the topics we will cover are:

1. The notion of intelligence and how it relates to language and communication.
2. Interspecies communication versus intraspecies communication.
3. Modes of communication (e.g. vocal/auditory, visual, tactile, olfactory, electromagnetic).
4. Environmental and motivational influences on communication.

Ling 470—Children’s Speech (Hunter Hatfield)

Students are first introduced to the structure of language: the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic systems of language. We then consider how normal children acquire these systems, focusing on how their development manifests itself in speech and comprehension. The focus is on the development of language from birth to roughly age 10, and later turns to areas of language that are relevant for clinical purposes. We consider language acquisition from biological, social/communicative, and cognitive perspectives. We discuss language acquisition in special populations, such as children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI), Williams Syndrome, etc. This class will be of interest to undergraduates and first year graduate students in Linguistics, Speech Pathology, Psychology, Anthropology, Education, etc.

Ling 611—Acoustic and Auditory Phonetics (Victoria Anderson)

This course investigates principles of acoustics and audition as they relate to speech communication. Students collaborate together to:

★ Learn about physical properties of speech waves (sound propagation, wave analysis, resonance, acoustic filters)
★ Examine relations between vocal tract articulations and their acoustic consequences (source-filter theory, vocal tract aerodynamics)
★ Receive training in basic principles of digital signal processing (sampling, quantization, pitch tracking, RMS amplitude, Fast Fourier Transforms, Linear Predictive Coding, spectral analysis)
★ Become skilled at using computer-based speech analysis tools to measure acoustic characteristics of vowels, consonants and suprasegmentals
★ Gain knowledge about human hearing, and how physical properties of intensity and frequency relate to sensations of “loudness” and “pitch” (aural anatomy, non-linear amplitude perception, frequency response of the auditory system, cochleagrams)
★ Find out about the variation in the physical characteristics of speech (intra- and interspeaker variation, acoustic characteristics of women’s men’s and children’s voices)
★ Gain exposure to speech perception experiments as tools to discover what cues listeners extract from what they hear (acoustic characteristics vs. acoustic cues, identification and discrimination tasks, categorical vs. continuous modes of perception, perceptual maps, confusion matrices)
★ Learn to relate acoustic, auditory and perceptual characteristics of sounds to language universals (quantal theory, adaptive dispersion theory, “preferred” vowels and consonants.)

Ling 622—Grammar (Yuko Otsuka)

The objective of this course is to introduce the basic concepts of explanatory grammar as opposed to descriptive grammar. Specifically, we will look at a theory developed within the framework of generative grammar, the Government and Binding Theory (GB) (Chomsky 1981). As a linguist, one needs to be able to accurately describe various specific syntactic phenomena of a language or across languages. Generative grammarians consider it equally important to investigate
a) why such phenomena exist, b) whether there are more
general rules underlying these specific phenomena, and c)
whether such rules are universal. In this course we will
cover the basic tenets of GB. The data used are primarily
from English, but also include some other languages.
Students are encouraged to bring in data from other
languages for discussion. The goal of this course is not
only to provide the basic knowledge of GB, but also to
courage students to exercise critical thinking and
improve their analytical skills. Students are expected to
actively participate in discussion.

Prerequisite: LING 422 (Introduction to
Grammatical Analysis)
Textbooks: Haegeman, Liliane (1994)
Introduction to Government and Binding Theory. 2nd ed.
Oxford: Blackwell

Ling 630—Field Methods
(Kenneth Rehg)
The goal of this course is to provide you with an
opportunity to experience the thrill of discovery—to
engage in a stimulating adventure that will take you where
no linguist has gone before. To this end, you will do
research on a language for which we have little or no
documentation. The course will focus on methods for
investigating phonology, morphology, and syntax, as well
as procedures for gathering, manipulating, and maintaining
a variety of types of data. Grades will be based on four
reports to be submitted at assigned times throughout the
semester.

Texts: Linguistic Fieldwork, edited by Paul
Newman and Martha Ratliff, and Field Linguistics by
Terry Crowley.

Ling 640Y—Psycholinguistics
(Amy Schafer)
This course is a broad introduction to
psycholinguistics, with emphasis on sentence processing
by adults. Areas covered include speech perception, word
recognition and production, lexical ambiguity, sentence
comprehension, discourse processing, sentence production,
and the role of memory in language processing.
Participants will be expected to do weekly reading from a
collection of articles and book chapters, present an article
from the required reading list, and write a proposal for a
research project.
Prerequisites: Completion of or concurrent
enrollment in Ling 421 and Ling 422 or the equivalent.

Ling 750F—Moras, Syllables, Stress: Characterizing
Linguistic Rhythm
(Victoria Anderson)
Phonologists have long suggested that talkers
strive to achieve preferred rhythmic patterns in their
speech, and have impressionistically characterized
languages in terms of three rhythmic types: “stress
timed,” “syllable timed,” and “mora timed.” English, for
example, has been described as placing stresses at
intervals of equal duration. French and Japanese have
been thought to place syllables and moras respectively at
equal intervals. The ability to produce language-
appropriate rhythm is an important part of a native
speaker’s competence; the lack of appropriate rhythm
contributes to a perception of foreign accent, or of
unnatural speech synthesis.

Nevertheless, phonologists’ intuitions about
linguistic rhythm resist being quantified. Instrumental
studies do not find isochronous intervals between stresses,
syllables or moras, and in the absence of such isochrony,
much recent investigation has focused on defining
phonetic measures that adequately capture the rhythmic
differences among languages.

In this seminar, we will ask some of the
following questions: What is the nature of rhythmic
differences among languages? Do three rhythmic types
exist, or is there a continuum of types? Are different
rhythmic types reliably implemented in the acoustic
signal? Does the phonology of a language contain an
autosegmental rhythmic tier? What would such a tier
look like? Is it perhaps internal rhythmic representations
(rather than external acoustic correlates) that are the
source of intuitions regarding isochrony in speech? How
do we find out?

Ling 750G(1)—Advanced Methods in Language
Documentation
(Nicholas Thieberger)
This course deals with a branch of linguistics
that is documentary, descriptive, theoretical, and
community-oriented. In this course, you will acquire
some of the skills that are required to undertake the
crucial task of documenting languages that are currently
endangered and/or underdocumented. You will learn how
to record data, to process texts with interlinear
annotations, to manage data using a database, and to
develop dictionaries. Readings will focus on archiving,
ethics in fieldwork and the impact of technology. By the
end of the semester, you will know how to use current
software to prepare well-formed linguistic data from
fieldwork.

Ling 750G(2)—Lexicography
(Kenneth Rehg)
This is going to be a hands-on, product oriented
course in the art and craft of lexicography. Using
Toolbox software, we will explore all aspects of the
dictionary making process, from preliminary design
through the preparation of camera-ready copy. Grades
will be based on a term project designed in consultation
with the instructor.
The Oxford Guide to Practical Lexicography by Atkins and Rundell, plus materials to be distributed in class.

Ling 750G(3)—Professional Development in Linguistics (Nicholas Thieberger)

In this course students will participate in the planning and running of the 1st International Conference on Language Documentation and Conservation, including reviewing abstracts, establishing sub-committees covering liaison with participants, program design, social events and other aspects of the conference. Students are expected to submit an abstract to the conference and to support a colloquium on issues facing graduate students involved in language documentation. They will assist in the running of the conference and then in editing selected papers to appear in the journal Language Documentation and Conservation.

Ling 750M—Simulation Semantics (Benjamin Bergen)

This course is an introduction to simulation semantics. Simulation semantics is a cognitively oriented theory of meaning, based on the idea that in order to produce or understand meaningful language, language users run a mental simulation of (that is, mentally imagine) the content of the utterance. Running this simulation involves activating the same brain structures that are responsible for perceiving or performing the events described in the utterance. On this view, linguistic units do not in and of themselves have meaning. Rather, they evoke meaning - they are cues that contribute to a blueprint, which the speaker provides to the hearer, so that the hearer can run an internal simulation with the desired properties.

The course will introduce evidence for simulation semantics from a variety of courses. We'll look at results from brain imaging studies and behavioral experiments in cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics. Students will have the opportunity to produce novel research in this new paradigm, and will present their work in the course.

Prerequisites: All students who have taken at least an introduction to cognitive linguistics, semantics, psycholinguistics, or experimental methods are welcome. Others require instructor approval.

Requirements: The idea of a 700-level seminar is to encourage independent research and thinking on the part of graduate students. In this research seminar, the main goals are for you to read about other people's work pertaining to simulation semantics and start working on your own research projects on simulation semantics.

Ling 750X(1)—Emergentist Work in Syntax and Language Acquisition (William O’Grady)

This seminar will focus on no recent emergentist and minimalist work relating to the following issues and phenomena (in no particular order) and their implications for our understanding of syntax and language acquisition:

- The nature of the minimalist and emergentist programs for language—similarities and differences.
- Unusual sorts of agreement (especially agreement involving complex NPs of various sorts).
- Scope relations involving negation and universal quantifiers.
- Control
- Want-to contraction
- Cross-linguistic variation—is the parameter approach still viable?

Ling 750X(2)—Issues in Austronesian Syntax (Yuko Otsuka)

This seminar will examine various syntactic phenomena in Austronesian languages. The objective of this seminar is twofold: first, to introduce a range of syntactic phenomena that are characteristic of Austronesian languages; and second, to analyze the relevant data within the generative framework and discuss some implications for general syntactic theory. Likely topics include “subject” in Austronesian languages, ergativity, Philippine-type focus system, V-initial word order, pseudo-cleft, pseudo-noun incorporation, and backward control. A general knowledge of GB is assumed.

Readings: a collection of journal articles and book chapters

Prerequisite: LING 622 (Grammar)

Ling 750Y—Psycholinguistics Seminar: Eyetracking in Linguistic Research (Amy Schafer)

This seminar will examine the use of freehead eyetracking in linguistic research and provide an introduction to head-mounted and “DIY” eyetracking research methods. The focus will be on psycholinguistic research (including sentence comprehension, sentence production, and first language acquisition), but students may also explore applications of freehead eyetracking to issues in phonetics and sociolinguistics. Some background in psycholinguistics will be assumed. The seminar will include hands-on work with a head-mounted eyetracking system as well as discussion of eyetracking research presented in articles that we will read.

Prerequisite: Ling 640Y or consent of instructor

Readings: A collection of journal articles and chapters.