Linguistics 2110.501 – Introduction to the Study of Language and Linguistics

Fall 2026	Online
Instructor:	Evan Ashworth, Ph.D.
Office Hours:	MW 12:30pm – 2:00pm and by appt.: https://unm.zoom.us/j/92130162083
Email:	eashworth@unm.edu (also, please feel free to contact me through course messages on Canvas)

Course Description

This course presents an introduction to the study of language through the basic aspects of linguistic analysis: the sound system (phonetics and phonology), the structure of words and sentences (morphology and syntax), and the ways in which language is used to convey meaning (semantics and pragmatics). In addition, we will investigate how language is acquired and stored in the brain, and how differences in speech styles and dialects reflect different social and cultural backgrounds of individual speakers.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the basic concepts and terminology associated with phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
2. Comprehend how language evolves over history and over an individual's lifespan.
3. Describe some common, but mistaken, beliefs about language and to distinguish between descriptive and prescriptive approaches to language.
4. Describe the social, psychological, geographic and historical influences that lead to language dominance or language endangerment.
5. Be aware of the relations among various languages in the world, between dialects and slang, and between human and non-human languages.
6. Apply methods of linguistic analysis as introduced in the course.
7. Critically engage with the works of linguistic researchers.

Course Requirements

• 5 Activities (25 points each)	125 points
• 4 Quizzes (20 points each)	80 points
• 5 Discussions (10 points each)	50 points
• Final Project	50 points
	305 points total

Textbook

Yule, George. (2020). *The study of language* (8th edition). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Materials/technology

You will need the following for this class:

- Access to UNM Canvas

Academic Dishonesty

According to UNM policy, academic dishonesty is defined as but not limited to "dishonesty in quizzes, tests or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records." You must do original work and properly cite all sources. Further, the use of AI assistance (e.g., ChatGPT, GPT4) is prohibited in this class—whether to assist in the reading or writing process. By using websites or programs that perform tasks such as summarizing written content or providing prompt-based written language, the student is not submitting original work or engaging in the process of scholarship. Original work does NOT include reusing a speech that you or someone else has written for another class or during a previous semester, nor does it allow for internet-generated speeches. If you are suspected or found to be in violation of this policy, severe sanctions may be imposed. These sanctions may include being assigned an F for the assignment or for the entire course, filing a formal complaint with the university, and being expelled from the university. If you are concerned about how well you are doing in this course, please come speak with me instead of considering academic misconduct.

Withdraw

Please consult your course catalog for withdrawal and refund deadlines. Students may withdraw from a course during the first six weeks of the semester without the Dean's approval and the withdrawal (W) will not be noted on your academic record. When students leave the University during a semester and do not complete the withdrawal process, they become liable for grades of "F" in their courses, even though they may have been passing at the time of leaving.

Incomplete

A grade of "Incomplete" is given only when circumstances beyond the student's control have prevented completion of the work of a course within the official dates of the semester or session. Students are responsible for making arrangements with the instructor for resolving an incomplete grade. If you receive an incomplete, it must be completed within one year from the published end day of the semester in which the grade was assigned. If the work is not finished in the allotted time period, the grade changes to an "F".

Accommodations
UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact the UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu. Also available is the Accessibility Resource Center at UNM-Albuquerque at arcsrvs@unm.edu or 505-277-3506. UAP 2720 and 2740. Our classroom and university should foster mutual respect, kindness, and support. If you have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or violence, please seek support and report incidents. Find confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center. UNM prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). All instructors are "responsible employees" who must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information, please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740.

Diversity
This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors as gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion and other relevant cultural identities. This course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating.

Title IX
In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM faculty, Teaching Assistants, and Graduate Assistants are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education (see pg. 15 -http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf). This designation requires that any report of gender discrimination, which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence made to a faculty member, TA, or GA, must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity (oeo.unm.edu). For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, see: https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html

Tutoring
Please visit the site below for information about tutoring services offered at UNM-Valencia: https://valencia.unm.edu/campus-resources/learning-commons/index.html

Communication
Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have through course messages in Canvas (see the icon for "inbox" in the left-hand navigation bar in Canvas for this course). Additionally, you may contact me at eashworth@unm.edu. I will respond to email/course messages in Canvas within 48 hours.

Grading and Communication Timeline
All assignments will graded within 10 days of their due date.

Grading Scale

100%-97%	A+	89%-87%	B+	79%-77%	C+	69%-67%	D+	59%↓ F
96%-93%	A	86%-83%	B	76%-73%	C	66%-63%	D	
92%-90%	A-	82%-80%	B-	72%-70%	C-	62%-60%	D-	

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings	Assignments / Quizzes Due
1	8/17 – 8/23	Syllabus, Descriptivism vs. Prescriptivism	Ch. 7 (pp. 102 - 103	Discussion #1
2	8/24 – 8/30	Animal Communication vs. Human Language	Ch.2	Activity #1
3	8/31 – 9/6	Phonetics	Ch. 3	Quiz #1
4	9/7 – 9/13	Phonology	Ch. 4	Discussion #2
5	9/14 – 9/20	Morphology	Chs. 5 & 6	Activity #2
6	9/21 – 9/27	Syntax	Ch. 8	Quiz #2
7	9/28 – 10/4	Semantics	Ch. 9	Discussion #3
8	10/5 – 10/11	Pragmatics	Chs. 10 & 11	Activity #3
9	10/12 – 10/18	Language and the Brain (Psycholinguistics)	Chs. 12 & 13	Quiz #3
10	10/19 – 10/25	Written Language	Ch. 16	Discussion #4
11	10/26 – 11/1	Language Change	Ch. 17	Activity #4
12	11/2 – 11/8	Sociolinguistics	Chs. 18 & 19	Quiz #4
13	11/9 – 11/15	Language, Culture, and Cognition	Ch. 20	Discussion #5
14	11/16 – 11/22	Language Endangerment, Preservation, and Revitalization	None	Activity #5
15	11/23 – 12/6	Work on Final Project	None	Final Project