



LIN101: Sign Language and Sign Systems

Course information:

Sign Language and Sign Systems
Linguistics Department
LIN 101-OLo7
Fall 2014
3 credit hours

Fall 2014, Second 8 weeks:

Oct 20-Dec 12

Instructor: Christina Healy

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Office: SLCC 3204

Office hours:

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00am

Thursdays, 5:30-6:30pm EST



Introduction:

Deaf people around the world use many different kinds of sign systems to communicate with each other and with hearing people. Some of these systems are natural human languages, some are natural but not complete languages, and some are invented codes for spoken languages. There are many important issues related to language. Children's mental development, education and learning of all sorts, social interaction, prejudice and discrimination all are strongly connected to language and communication. You use language everyday but may have not given much thought to the use of and effects of language on your everyday life. This class will help get you started on thinking about language and its role in your life and in the world.

The goal of this class is to give you what you need to make informed decisions about language for yourselves, your families, and your communities. We will start with some background on the Deaf community and some basic information about language in general. Next, we will focus on American Sign Language (ASL), a natural language that developed among deaf people. We will look at ASL's grammar and compare it to English and other sign languages. Third, we will look at English-influenced varieties of signing: natural mixtures such as contact signing and simultaneous communication (sim-com), and codes for English such as SEE 2. Fourth, we will study how children learn languages and other communication systems. Finally we will explore the issues of language in use, i.e., language policy, parent/child communication, language in the schools, and interpreting.

Course description

An introduction to the major features of languages and to the structure, use, and variation in the sign languages and sign systems commonly used in the United States. The course will cover four major topics: (1) Language: The nature and definition of languages, the uniqueness of language, and contrasts between language and other forms of communication; (2) Language and Culture: The role of language in human society, with special focus on language acquisition, language identity, and bilingualism; (3) American Sign Language Structure: A survey of the major features of the linguistic structure of ASL. Topics are: Phonology: the structure of the physical signals; Morphology: the basic structure and composition of meaningful units of ASL; Syntax: word order and nonmanual syntactic signals in ASL sentences; (4) Language Variation: Language variation and language contact in the deaf community, including discussions of contact varieties of signing and systems for representing English.

This course will introduce the following linguistic concepts:

1. Phonological transcription systems - Stokoe notation, Movement-Hold
2. Phonological Process, variation and change
3. Morphemes - free, bound, inflectional, derivational
4. Morphological processes - compounding, affixation, numeral incorporation
5. Syntactic issues - word order, sentence types, grammatical non-manuals

These Topics will provide the necessary foundation for LIIN 263: The Structure of ASL as well as more advanced linguistic coursework.

Course learning outcomes:

- compare and contrast varieties of signing used in the Deaf community
- list and define the characteristics of a natural language
- understand and explain the impact of modality on language
- understand and explain the differences between ASL and English
- understand and explain the way young children learn language
- practice academic writing consistent with the field of linguistics
- practice making coherent arguments for policies and ideas

Learning opportunities:

- in class discussion and activities
 - homework assignments in written English and in ASL
 - exams
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Class materials:

All readings will be available on Blackboard. You may print the articles or read them on your computer. You are not required to buy any books. You will post videos of yourself for some assignments. Make sure that you have access to a video camera or computer with a built in camera.

Email communication:

If you have a question about the schedule or an assignment in any of your classes, first check the syllabus and Blackboard. If you still cannot find the answer, you may email the professor. When emailing any professor:

- 1) Open with a greeting,
- 2) Use complete sentences, and
- 3) End with a closing and your name.

Be sure to mention which of the professor's class you are in and what your specific question is.

Grades:

Grades will be based on a point system. All of the course assignments and activities will be worth points. Your final grade will depend on how many points you have earned

Activity	Points
Homework (18)	200
Examinations (3)	150
Discussion Board Posts (9)	165
Discussion Board Comments (7)	35
Total	550

Grade	Point range
A	511-550
A-	495-510
B+	478-494
B	456-477
B-	440-455
C+	423-439

C	401-422
C-	385-400
D+	368-384
D	346-367
F	less than 346

Homework:

All readings have homework assignments accompanying them. Some readings also have short lectures to watch. After completing the reading (and watching the lecture), you will complete an assignment based on the reading. Once submitted you will immediately receive your grade. If your online assignment freezes for some reason or you do not think it was successfully submitted, email me so I can check or re-set it if necessary.

Examinations:

There will be three examinations. Each exam will be worth 50 points and will be taken online. You will have an hour and a half to complete the exam. Please do not start the exam until you have the hour and a half to complete it. You can not start the next unit until you have completed the previous Unit Exam.

There is NO FINAL EXAM for this course.

Exam	Topic	Date
Exam 1	Unit 1: Languages and Linguistics	November 16th**
Exam 2	Unit 2: Communication Systems	November 30th**
Exam 3	Unit 3: Language in Use	December 12th**

**Because this class is self-paced, these dates are approximations of expected times you will take each exam. However, each student may take it on different dates.

Discussion Board Comments:

You will be expected to make nine discussion board posts. These will be short responses in English or ASL videos responding to specific question(s) posted in the Discussion Board. Instructions for recording and posting these videos are posted. You will also be expected to comment on posts.

On-line Etiquette:

Expectations

Since OL LIN 101 is 100% online, there is no attendance policy. However, you are expected to take and complete tests, show your work and participate in the discussion board. It is expected that you have a level of familiarity with the internet and online learning environments that will allow you to access the material, take online exams and post short videos.

The people in this class come from many different backgrounds, and sometimes we may have difficulty understanding each other. We all have good ideas, however, and we all have an important contribution to make to the class. Everyone in the class (including the teacher) will make the following two commitments:

1. To respect each person and do your best to understand what he or she is saying.
2. To respond to each other in a respectful manner.

Self Paced / Self Discipline

This course is divided into 8 weeks. Each week you will have various assignments that need to be completed. Each unit has an Exam. The assignments in a unit can be completed at anytime, however, you will not be permitted to start the next unit until you have completed the previous unit exam. For example, material for Unit 2 will not be visible until Unit 1 Exam has been submitted.

It is highly encouraged that you keep up with the assigned readings, homework and discussion board comments. Working consistently over the eight weeks will ensure you can complete all the course requirements and learn the information most effectively. Unforeseen circumstances do arise and, generally speaking, you will gain less from the course if you try to do too much at once. Most participants will learn the information better and have a more rewarding online experience by logging-in frequently throughout each week and participating fully throughout the course.

Time Commitment

You should plan to spend 1-2 hours per day doing course related work. Depending upon the subject matter, you may absorb the material more quickly or more slowly. The advantage to this course format is that you can learn at your own pace and take as much time as you like, as long as work is completed.

Technology Support:

Often the instructor is unable to assist with technology issues. If there are questions or issues with technology, please contact Gallaudet University Technology Helpdesk for assistance:

Email: Helpdesk@gallaudet.edu

Videophone: 202-250-2313

Phone: 202-651-5044

URL: http://www.gallaudet.edu/gts/help_desk.html

Extra Credit:

Extra credit opportunities will be available to earn additional points. These points will be added to the student's final grade. The best way to earn the grade you want is to do the homework on time, participate in the discussions on our class board, and ask questions if you do not understand something.

Gallaudet University Academic Integrity Policy

http://www.gallaudet.edu/catalog/registration_and_policies/undergrad_policies/academic_integrity.html

Students with Disabilities

Students who need special services or accommodations should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSWD), located in SAC Room 1022.

Subject to change

Any changes to the syllabus or schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

This course supports the Linguistics Department and University Learning Outcomes:

Linguistics Department Learning Outcomes:

- I. Students will engage in critical thinking and analysis of the constructs, claims, and conclusions of the fields that comprise the study of linguistics.
- II. Students will learn about how the field of linguistics formulates and supports a claim and the arguments that support it and be able to demonstrate logical argumentation in their coursework.
- III. Students will understand and use all aspects of technical writing, as practiced in the field of linguistics.
- IV. (a) Graduate students will demonstrate a working knowledge of professional level scholarly work in the field and be able to lead class discussions on such work. (b) Undergraduate students will demonstrate a working knowledge of pedagogical materials from the field.
- V. Students will display expressive and receptive competency in the academic uses of ASL and English.
- VI. Students will understand and make use of the principles governing responsible conduct of scholarly inquiry, the principles of academic honesty set forth in the Gallaudet Graduate School Policy on Academic Honesty, and the guidelines and requirements of the Institutional Review Board, where appropriate.

University Learning Outcomes:

1. Language & Communication: Students will use American Sign Language and written English to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, for a variety of purposes, and in a variety of settings.
2. Critical Thinking: Students will summarize, synthesize, and critically analyze ideas from multiple sources in order to draw well-supported conclusions and solve problems.
3. Identity & Culture: Students will understand themselves, complex social identities, including deaf identities, and the interrelations within and among diverse cultures and groups.
4. Knowledge & Inquiry: Students will apply knowledge, modes of inquiry, and technological competence from a variety of disciplines in order to understand human experience and the natural world.
5. Ethics & Social Responsibility: Students will make well-reasoned ethical judgments, showing awareness of multiple value systems and taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions. They will apply these judgments, using collaboration and leadership skills, to promote social justice in their local, national, and global communities.

Course Student Learning Outcomes							
compare and contrast varieties of signing used in the Deaf community		✓		✓	✓		
list and define the characteristics of a natural language	✓	✓		✓			
understand and explain the impact of modality on language	✓	✓		✓	✓		
understand and explain the differences between ASL and English	✓	✓		✓	✓		
understand and explain the way young children learn language	✓	✓					
practice academic writing consistent with the field of linguistics		✓	✓		✓	✓	
practice making coherent arguments for policies and ideas		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Department Learning Outcomes						
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	
			✓		✓		1
	✓		✓	✓			2
				✓			3
	✓	✓	✓				4
	✓			✓		✓	5
							University Learning Outcomes

LIN 101 Sign Language and Sign Systems Readings

Fleetwood, E. and Metzger, M. 1998. Chapter 6 Cued language: some implications. Cued Language Structure: An Analysis of Cued American English Based on Linguistic Principles. Calliope Press: Silver Spring, MD. pp. 63-78. Chapter 6 – Cued Language: some implications. (Readings packet page nbrs 66-83)

Frishberg, N. 1975. Arbitrariness and Iconicity: Historical Change in American Sign Language. Language, Vol 51 number 3. Pp. 696- 719.

Johnson, R., Erting, C. and Liddell, S. 1994. A Brief Overview of Unlocking the Curriculum. In Erting C. et al (eds.) The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC. pp. 591-598

Lucas, C, Bayley, R. and Valli, C. 2003. Chapter 3-6. What’s Your Sign for Pizza? Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC. Pp. 17-53.

Padden, C. (1996) From the Cultural to the Bicultural: The Modern Deaf Community. In Parasnis, I (ed) Cultural and Language Diversity and the Deaf Experience. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. Pp. 79 – 98.

Padden, C. and T. Humphries Chapter 3 A different center. Deaf in America: Voices from a Culture. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA. Pgs. 39 - 55.

Stewart, D.A. and Luetke-Stahlman, B. 1998. Chapter 6: Signing Exact English. In The Signing Family: What Every Parent Should Know About Sign Communication. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC. pp. 84-102

Stewart, D.A. and Luetke-Stahlman, B. 1998. Chapter 8: Contact Signing. In The Signing Family: What Every Parent Should Know About Sign Communication. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC. pp. 118-129

Stewart, T. and Vaillette, N. 2001. 2.1 – True Language. In Language Files. Ohio State University Press: Columbus, OH. pp. 19-21

Sutton-Spence, R. and Woll, B. 1998. Chapter 1: Linguistics and Sign Languages. In The Linguistics of British Sign Language. CUP, Cambridge. pp. 1-21

- Sutton-Spence, R. and Woll, B. 1998. Chapter 2: BSL in Social Context. In The Linguistics of British Sign Language. CUP, Cambridge. pp. 22-40.
- Tevenal, S. and Villanueva, M. 2009. Are You Getting the Message? The Effects of SimCom on the Message Received by Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Hearing Students. Sign Language Studies, 9-3. pgs. 266 – 286.
- Valli, C, C. Lucas, K. Mulrooney, M Villanueva. 2011. *Deriving Nouns from Verbs*. In The Linguistics of American Sign Language. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC pgs. 62-66.
- Valli, C, C. Lucas, K. Mulrooney, M Villanueva. 2011. *Basic Sentence Types*. In The Linguistics of American Sign Language. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC pgs. 91 - 99.
- Valli, C, C. Lucas, K. Mulrooney, M Villanueva. 2011. *Verbs*. In The Linguistics of American Sign Language. Gallaudet University Press: Washington, DC pgs. 133 - 145.