

Linguistics

Upward Bound Summer 2009

Welcome to Linguistics! In this class, you will:

- learn the basics of how language works and how people use it
- do hands-on research using experimental and observational methods
- explore the social meanings of linguistic diversity
- create positive public messages to debunk language myths

General info

MTWR 2:00-2:50 in Rm AT 104

Instructor: Mark Myslín

Email: mmyslín@gmail.com

Office hours: Wednesday 1:00-1:50 or by appointment, Rm AT 104

Course website: www.markmyslin.com/ublinguistics

(contains assignments, lecture slides, cool links and other stuff)



Components of the course

Homework 40% of grade

Homework will be assigned almost every day and it will usually be due the next day. I will post the homework on the course website after class every day should you need to double-check the assignment. Working together on homework is encouraged but everyone must turn in their own assignment. If you have questions about the homework, please ask before turning it in! I'll check for questions every day before collecting homework.

One of your assignments will be to post at least once on our private class blog, the Upward Bound Language Log, about anything you notice about language. (I will give more info about this in class.) You may do this assignment anytime before Friday, July 31. Be sure to email me when you post so I can give you credit! Posting more than once or commenting on other posts is a very good thing and will earn you some extra credit ☺.

Participation 25%

Good participation means coming to class on time every day with a positive attitude, taking part in activities, and respecting all people and ideas in class. Good participation does not mean plagiarizing, making offensive comments or jokes about any person or group, having side conversations when someone has the floor, leaving to go to the bathroom more than once a week, or having iPods or phones out during class. Any kind of continued disruptive behavior (after I have talked to you about it) will result in reductions to your participation grade and standard Upward Bound disciplinary protocol, which may include early in-room time, stipend deductions, or a conference with the program director.

Midterm 10%

The midterm exam will be given on Tuesday, July 21. We will have a review session in class the day before.

Final project 25%

The final project is to create a positive public message about any widely held language myth, working in a group with two other students. I will hand out a list of suggested topics early in the course and encourage you to start thinking about and working on this early. You will have time in class to work on it during the last week but you'll also have to do a good bit of work outside of class. Extra credit for presenting at the final showcase!

Contacting me

I'll usually be on campus most of the day and I'm always available to talk about questions you may have about the class, linguistics in general, college, or anything else you may want to talk about. Office hours is also a great time for this. Email is another excellent way to get in touch with me, and I try to reply immediately when I can. You may request a current grade report from me at any time. I'm open to your ideas about the content of the class and giving alternate assignments. So do come talk to me!

Tentative course schedule

Please note this is only a rough plan and may be subject to change. All assignments and due dates will be announced in class and on the course website.

Week 1: Intro. The sounds of language

1. *Intro to linguistics*. What is language? Description vs. prescription.
2. *Phonetics*. Anatomy of the vocal tract.
3. *Phonetics*. Describing the world's speech sounds with the International Phonetic Alphabet.
4. *Phonology*. Sound patterns in languages. Begin wug experiment.

Week 2: Words, sentences, and meaning

1. *Morphology*. (New) word formation. Is it a word if it's not in the dictionary?
2. *Syntax*. Word classes. Nouns and verbs yahoo!
3. *Syntax*. The structure of sentences: Constituent structure, construction grammar.
4. *Semantics*. Meanings. Lies. Synonyms. Corpus linguistics activity.

Week 3: Midterm. Language and social identity

1. Review game
2. Midterm
3. *Intro to sociolinguistics*. Status, style, stereotypes. Intro project.
4. *Dialects*. California English, perceptual dialectology, *hella*.

Week 4: Language and social identity

1. *Generations*. Language of MySpace and text messages. Slang. *Dude*.
2. *Ethnicity*. African American English. 1996 Oakland schools controversy.
3. *Politics of language*. Bilingualism, education, and 'English-only.' Spanish in the U.S.
4. *Language, gender, and power*. Women's 'assertiveness training'; men's vernacular variants.

Week 5: Final project

1. Project work day
2. Project work day
- 3.
4. (Extra credit: Present projects @ showcase)