

San José State University
Department of Linguistics & Language Development

LING 20-1: Nature of Language
Fall 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	David Dodick
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Office Hours:	M/W 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	M/W 9:00 - 10:15 a.m.
Classroom:	Clark Hall (CL) 242

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the nature of language as a social institution and practice in observing language structure and use in local speech communities. We will take a scientific approach to language in order to see it for what it really is. We will teach each other a little bit about the languages that each of us speak in order to gain an appreciation of our delightful diversity. We will explore the importance of the fact that different groups of people have different ways of speaking, and we will compare patterns of language use in different cultures. Finally, we will question the notion that people should have a right to tell others how to speak.

Required Reading

All readings, as well as other class materials, will be available via Canvas. There is no required textbook for this class.

Course Website

Course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, assignments, notices, etc. can be found in Canvas. A final exam review will also be posted in Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas to learn of any updates.

Contact Information

The best way to reach me is via SJSU email. I will do my best to respond to you within 24 hours (48 hours on weekends). You may also try reaching me at my office phone number during office hours, but I do not check messages at that number, so the best way to reach me quickly is still by email.

General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation. Field assignments 1-5.
2. Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts. Field assignments 2, 3, 5.
3. Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them. Field assignments 1, 3, 4, 5.
4. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. Field assignment 4.
5. Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international level. Field assignments 2, 4.
6. Additionally, students will be able to recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals. Field assignments 4, 5.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate recognition of the interaction of social institutions, culture, and the environment with the language behavior and identity of individuals.
2. Demonstrate understanding of language as a creative and systematic human ability.
3. Identify processes of language change.
4. Demonstrate awareness that different dialects of English are rule-governed systems.
5. Use linguistic methods to collect and analyze data from local communities.
6. Formulate original conclusions about contemporary language use and its variation in diverse regional, social, cultural, or ethnic communities.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- *Lectures and discussion based on readings:* Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before they are discussed in class, and to participate in all in-class activities, including discussions on the topic of the day, group work, and in-class problem-solving. (See *Schedule* for reading assignments.)
- *Quizzes and informal homework:* Short quizzes will test for the main ideas of readings assigned for specific lectures. Homework will provide practice in linguistic analysis, which will help prepare you for exams.
- *Field assignments:* Instructions are to be downloaded from Canvas, completed, and emailed to the instructor before the due date and time. Field assignments must be typed, in 12-point font, one-and-a-half or double spaced, with margins of one inch and submitted as either a Word document (.doc or .docx) or as an Adobe .pdf file; documents in shared drives are not accepted. They must be at least 300 words long (about 1 page); transcribed language data will not count towards the length requirement. Field assignments must also be uploaded to *Turnitin* via Canvas. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be posted as indicated on the schedule.

- *Exams*: A midterm and final exam will be given to test student knowledge on the concepts learned in class. They will consist of a variety of question and answer formats, including multiple choice, short-answer and short essay questions.
- *Participation*: Students earn participation points from in-class discussion, problem solving and group activities. Note that participation points cannot be made up; that is, no other activity can substitute for missed participation points.

Grading Information

- Assignments are due before the stated due date and time.
- All work must be **typed** and submitted via email, unless otherwise specified.
- Each assignment and exam is scored on a basis that allows for easy conversion to a percentage. These scores are then weighted as part of your final grade. For example, if you scored 100% on the first assignment, this would be weighted as 5 out of 5 points in the course's final 100-point total; if you got a 90, this would count as 90% of 5 (or $0.9 \times 5 = 4.5$ points towards the final 100).
- Scores will be made visible via Canvas as they are recorded. Students may check their cumulative scores with the instructor via email at any time.
- Extra credit is not available for this course.
- Late policy: Except in the case of a documented medical crisis, assignments submitted **after** the due date and time but within 24 hours of the due date and time will be assessed a 10% penalty. Those submitted after the first 24-hour period will be penalized an additional 10% for each late day.
- Exams may not be taken at times other than their scheduled dates and times. Exceptions must be negotiated with the instructor well in advance of the stated exam time.
- The table below provides the weighting of course tasks in the final grade:

Quizzes 1-10 (1% each)	10%
Field Assignments 1-5 (10% each)	50%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	5%
Total	100%

- Your final grade is based on the percentage of total points earned in the class. The table below gives the approximate expected point-values of each grade. Possible grades are A through F.

A+	98-100	B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9	D+	64-66.9
A	94-97.9	B	84-86.9	C	74-76.9	D	60-63.9
A-	90-93.9	B-	80-83.9	C-	70-73.9	F	< 60

Classroom Protocol

- It is important to arrive to class on time, as late arrivals are disruptive to everyone.
- Put your cell phone on silent or vibrate and don't text or take calls in class.
- Personal computers may be used in class only to support activity directly related to the course, for example, to take class notes or follow a link suggested by the instructor.
- Absolutely no access to electronic devices (phones, ipads, laptops, iwatches, et al.) will be allowed during exams.
- Each assignment must be the original work of the student who turns it in. Students may discuss homework assignments with classmates, but everything you turn in must be your own original writing. Work that is not original will be considered to be plagiarized and appropriate penalties will apply.
- Bringing food or drink to class is discouraged.
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact me or a fellow student to find out what you've missed.
- No late-add petitions can be signed or approved by the instructor, chair or Dean of H & A.
- The instructor reserves the right to reschedule lecture topics, assignments and exams with adequate advance notice.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity (plagiarism), accommodations, student rights and responsibilities, adding/dropping, student services and other important topics is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. Students are strongly urged to read this information at the beginning of the semester.

LING 20-1: NATURE OF LANGUAGE (Fall 2018)
COURSE SCHEDULE

The syllabus is subject to change with fair warning; changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
1	W 8/22	Introduction to the class		
2	M 8/27	Introduction to linguistics	Finegan	
	W 8/29	Language Myths		Quiz 1
	M 9/03	Labor Day – no class		
	W 9/05	Heritage Languages	Hinton	<i>FA1 assigned</i>
4	M 9/10	Semiotics		
	W 9/12	Word formation	Language Files	<i>FA1 due</i>
5	M 9/17	Neologisms	Gharavi; Contreras	Quiz 2
	W 9/19	Sounds of language	Kachru & Smith	<i>FA2 assigned</i>
6	M 9/24	Sounds of language		Quiz 3
	W 9/26	Regional & social variation	Wofram	<i>FA2 due</i>
7	M 10/01	<i>Do You Speak American?</i> (documentary)		
	W 10/03	Speech acts	Yule; cios.org	Quiz 4
8	M 10/08	Exercise on FA3		<i>FA3 assigned</i>
	W 10/10	Register	Holmes	
9	M 10/15	Conversational style	Tannen	Quiz 5
	W 10/17	Midterm review		<i>FA3 due</i>
10	M 10/22	MIDTERM EXAM		
	W 10/24	Ethnography of communication	Salzmann	
11	M 10/29	Exercise on FA4		<i>FA4 assigned</i>
	W 10/31	Slang	Eble	
12	M 11/05	Language & gender	Bucholtz; Tannen	Quiz 6
	W 11/07	Language & gender		<i>FA4 due</i>
13	M 11/12	Veteran’s Day – no class		
	W 11/14	Exercise on FA5		<i>FA5 assigned</i>
14	M 11/19	Bilingualism	Goldman; Holmes	Quiz 7
	W 11/21	Non-Instructional Day – no class		<i>FA5 topic due</i>
15	M 11/26	<i>Speaking in Tongues</i> (documentary)		
	W 11/28	Codeswitching	Pfohl	Quiz 8
16	M 12/03	AAE	Rickford & Rickford; Baugh	
	W 12/05	Language diversity & education	Tottie	Quiz 9 <i>FA5 due</i>
17	M 12/10	Standardization	Miller; File 10.6; Baugh	Quiz 10

Week	Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
	W 12/12	FINAL EXAM (7:15 – 9:30 a.m.)		