

University of Ghana

Department of Linguistics

Sample Fall Courses

LING 331 Introduction to Phonology (Prerequisite LING 221)

The course introduces students to how languages organise their sounds into larger structures. Data from wide-ranging languages will be used in problem solving sessions. Topics to be treated include: phonemes, distinctive features, phonological processes, and phonological rules.

LING 333 Phonetics and Phonology of a Ghanaian Language (Prerequisite LING 221)

This is a set of courses each of which is designed to enable students to apply the principles of phonetics and phonology to the description of the sounds and sound patterns of a Ghanaian language. Topics include: segmental phonemes – vowels, consonants and their distribution, syllable structure, tone, and phonological processes.

LING 335 Phonetics and Phonology of English (Prerequisite LING 221)

The course covers the segmental phonemes of English, as well as the suprasegmental features of stress and intonation. Topics include: consonants, vowels, the syllable, word stress, tone groups, tonic stress on stressed syllable within tone group, and phonological processes.

LING 341 Child Language Development

This course is designed to introduce students to theories that explain how and when children achieve proficiency in the language they are exposed to without receiving deliberate instruction in the rules of language. Students will be required to design and administer simple experiments to test children's knowledge of aspects of the grammar of their language. Topics include: linguistics and language acquisition, phonological acquisition, morphological development and innovation, acquisition of syntax, syntactic and semantic development, cognition, environment and language learning.

LING 343 Introduction to Translation Theory (Prerequisite LING 222 or 223)

This course is meant to give linguistic help to those wishing to translate between a Ghanaian language or a modern language and English. Literal and meaningful translations are contrasted; and meaning is distinguished into three major categories. Concepts are represented by lexemes, which can be analysed into features, related in sets, and combined with each other; they may have primary, secondary, and figurative senses; concepts may or may not be shared between cultures. Connotations of words and activities, differing from culture to culture; the social relations between sender and receiver; and the overall purpose of a communication, all need to be translated.

LING 345 Sociolinguistics

This course is designed to help students gain a) insight into the social dynamics of language use and b) understand certain basic concepts and issues in sociolinguistics. Topics include: definition and scope of sociolinguistics, linguistic varieties, speech communities/communities of practice, communicative competence, politeness and solidarity, bilingualism/multilingualism, language and gender, and language attitudes.

LING 347 Oral Literature

This course surveys various forms of oral literature in Africa, and discusses theories of composition and aesthetic formations. It will examine the dynamics of form, language, style, content and performance of verbal genres including: libation poetry, praise appellations, abuse poetry, dirge, narrative forms, proverbs, riddles, drum poetry, traditional song, and popular music. It also considers how such genres are perceived and evaluated in the contexts in which they occur, and how they have been adapted to deal with contemporary and emerging trends.

LING 421 Phonological Theory (Prerequisite LING 331)

This course explores phonological issues from particular theoretical perspectives. Data from a variety of languages will be analysed. Topics to be treated include tonality, syllabification, phonological processes, autosegmental phonology, lexical phonology and optimality theory.

LING 423 Advanced syntax (Prerequisite LING 222)

This course is aimed at helping students to acquire advanced knowledge in syntactic analysis using data from a wide variety of languages and to prepare them for further work in any syntactic theory. Students may be introduced to any of the competing theories of syntax such as functional grammar, relational grammar, the principles and parameters framework and/or the minimalist programme.

LING 431 Syntax of a Ghanaian Language (Prerequisite LING 334)

This course aims at providing advanced knowledge of the syntactic structures of a particular Ghanaian language. Topics include serialisation and other multiverb constructions, complementation, interrogative constructions, relative clauses, reflexivisation, grammaticalisation, and focus constructions.

LING 433 Syntax of English (Prerequisite LING 221 or 333)

This course provides students the opportunity to appreciate some of the advanced issues in the syntax of English. Informed by advances in various theoretical approaches to the structure of English beyond the word-level, the course examines topics such as grammatical relations, complementation, transitivity, relative clause formation, reflexivisation, interrogatives, and identificational and existential constructions.

LING 435 Language in Business

In the fast changing world of the workplace, effective communication has become an essential tool for successful career practice. The idea of this course is to guide students to appreciate the relevant connection between language analysis and the world of work. Topics covered in the course include business writing skills, word building strategies, effective use of words, presentation skills, cross-cultural business communication.

LING 437 Pidgin and Creole Languages

The course will cover various pidgins and creoles of the world, including Haiti, Jamaica, Came-ron, Sierra Leone, Ghana & Nigeria. It examines theories of their origin, their socio-cultural significance and their use in the modern world. Their linguistic features will be compared with those of other languages. Topics include: theories of origins, pidginization, creolization, and structure.

LING 439 Advanced Theory of Translation

The course deals with the basic unit of communication, the proposition, which is analysed into a central predicate with various participants, as well as circumstances. Propositions may be combined in embedded, parallel, and sequential relationships. As regards textual presentation, attention is paid to cohesion with various genres, and especially to prominence within information structure. The course also examines the assumed cooperation between source author and translator and target receiver, in relations to coherence and readability.

LING 441 Psycholinguistics

In this course, students will gain insight into the relationship between language behaviour and the psychological processes that seem to underlie it. The course will consider the neuropsychological foundations of language and the psychological perspectives on language processing. Topics include: language and the brain, bilingualism, psychological aspects of bilingualism, producing and understanding utterances, and aphasia.

LING 443 Language and Law

The course examines notions of meaning and usage that are exploited in the legal field. Its main focus is on language as a tool for understanding legal matters. As part of the course, a number of actual legal cases that illustrate the various linguistic notions of ambiguity, vagueness, metaphor, etc. will be examined. Topics include: features and structures of legal language, notions of status, states and acts, relevance of Speech Act Theory in hearsay, contract formation, language crimes.

LING 445 Linguistics and Language Teaching

The course will discuss the relevance of insights from linguistics research to the development of methods of language teaching. Methods such as the Audio-lingual, Communicative, and Total Physical Response will be treated. The teaching of reading and spelling will also be covered.

LING 447 Current Topics in Linguistics

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to be introduced to some of the topical issues in Linguistics, as and when the need arises.