English

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306A  Introduction to Linguistics
10:00-11:20 TTh MC 4058

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Hagey Hall 247, x5362
Hours: 8:00 - 9:30, Wednesdays, Thursdays
Home phone (Milton): (905) 876-3972
RAHA@WATARTS.UWATERLOO.CA
HTTP://WWW.ARTS.UWATERLOO.CA/~ RAHA

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We study what it means to know and use a language: you need to know the sounds, the words, the way words group together, and how those word groups fit into a web of meaning. That's a lot just to get someone to pass you the salt or agree that the Leafs sucked last night, but you deploy those systems effortlessly every day. What's more, you know them pretty much the way you know how to breathe or swallow or ride a bike: at a below-the-surface level. At the surface, you don't know which of your consonants resonate out your nose, but you know it, because you always send the right ones out the nose. In this course, we're going to drag that knowledge to the surface, kicking and screaming.

We're also going to see how that knowledge interacts with other, non-linguisticky areas of cognition—in particular, perception, emotion, categorisation, abstraction processes, and reasoning—to get some purchase on the way we express and exchange ideas and thoughts through weird little noises or marks on a page or lines and circles on a screen, like these ones.

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Midterm I (2 June) 20%
Midterm II (7 July) 30%
Final (TBA) 50%

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and some other minor massaging. Either edition is fine for the course, but I'll be using the 2nd edition, so if you're using the first, be aware of minor pagination discrepancies. As always, if you are unsure about anything in the book, please ask.

English 306A is a required course in the Cognitive Science option.

Please have the required readings done before class, and be prepared to read them again after class, and, if you're not clear about something, ASK.

The textbook will be supplemented very regularly with concepts and examples, and the lectures have a strongly cumulative structure. It is, therefore, not a very good idea to miss class. If you do, get notes, preferrably from more than one person, so you can triangulate on what we did.

Familiarize yourself with policy #71, particularly with regard to plagiarism and other forms of cheating.

Course links and downloads (please report linkrot)

Answers to the textbook exercises here

Miscellaneous

Consonant and Vowel Charts
A FAQ for 306A
Word Categories.pdf
English Inflectional Morphemes.pdf
Forms of English be and pronouns.pdf
Klingon.pdf
Láadan.pdf

Lecture materials
Please note these files were developed for lecturing only, and made available for your convenience; they were not developed for home-studying, independent of the course, and they contain many redundancies, partial explanations, enigmatic notes, and so on—the sorts of things which depend on in-class lectures to clarify.

For onscreen viewing
This list includes power-point show files (pps), which you can download and view on your own machine with MS PowerPoint (part of the MS Office suite), or with PowerPoint Viewer (available in a free download from Microsoft). You can also print them off, of course, though that's probably a waste of resources. Above the line are the final versions; below are the preliminary versions.

Intro.pps

History.pps

For printing
This list includes portable document format files (pdf), which you can download and view on your own machine with Acrobat Reader (available in a free download from Adobe). You can use these files anyway you like, but they have small grayscale images of the slides I used in class, and they are meant to help you take and/or collate your notes. Above the line are the final versions; below are the preliminary versions.

Intro.pdf

History.pdf

Linguistics sites

Fields of linguistics
Linguistic Society of America FAQ
LINGUIST list site

Cognitive linguistic sites

Cognitive linguistics, the journal
Bert Peeters's article on Cognitive Linguistics
Marjolijn Verspoor's home page

Language pages

Klingon language page
I love languages page (formerly the Human languages page)

Phonetics and phonology sites

International Phonetics Association
Interactive phonemic lessons
IPA Help
Get the IPA font here
IPA and ASCII alphabets (with sound)

Writing systems

Evolution of alphabets

Karen Chung's magnificent list o' links

Language and linguistics links

Miscellaneous

Online english grammar
Glossary of linguistics terms

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This is secret linguistic code for “schedule”: it's a link.