

SYLLABUS

LE. ES. English Language

Module : Introduction to Language (M21)

Semester: 3

I- COURSE OBJECTIVES:

General objective:

- Define language and recognize its nature.
- Differentiate between human language and other means of communication.
- Identify different forms of language.
- Recognize various factors that influence language variety and change.
- Explain observed language phenomena using newly acquired knowledge.
- Illustrate newly introduced concepts with authentic examples from their own experiences as language users.
- Think critically about their lived experiences as language users and relate them to the course content.
- Reflect on how their L1 is related to other languages and varieties

Specific objectives:

- **Define Language and Recognize Its Nature:**
 - Describe key definitions of language from different linguistic perspectives.
 - Identify and explain the unique features that distinguish human language from other cognitive systems.
 - Summarize the role of language in human cognitive and social development.
- **Differentiate Between Human Language and Other Means of Communication:**
 - Compare and contrast the characteristics of human language with non-human communication systems (e.g., animal communication, sign systems).
 - Illustrate examples where non-verbal communication plays a complementary role to verbal language.
 - Analyze case studies showcasing the limitations of non-human communication in comparison to human language.
- **Identify Different Forms of Language:**
 - Categorize the primary forms of language, including spoken, written, and signed languages.
 - Explain the structure and function of dialects, sociolects, and registers within a linguistic community.
 - Provide examples of language variation within a multilingual society.
- **Recognize Various Factors That Influence Language Variety and Change:**
 - Identify sociocultural, historical, and geographical factors that lead to language variation and evolution.
 - Analyze the impact of globalization, technology, and migration on language use and change.

- Illustrate language change with historical shifts, creolization, or code-switching. examples such as language
- **Explain Observed Language Phenomena Using Newly Acquired Knowledge:**
 - Apply theoretical frameworks to interpret language phenomena such as bilingualism, language borrowing, or slang development.
 - Evaluate real-world linguistic examples and provide explanations rooted in learned course content.
- **Illustrate Newly Introduced Concepts with Authentic Examples from Their Own Experiences as Language Users:**
 - Connect linguistic concepts learned in class to personal or observed instances of language use.
 - Create a portfolio of language samples (e.g., conversations, written excerpts) that demonstrate newly learned linguistic principles.
- **Think Critically About Their Lived Experiences as Language Users and Relate Them to the Content of the Course:**
 - Reflect on personal language use and identify instances of language variation or change.
 - Formulate critical reflections or essays that relate linguistic theories to personal or community language practices.
- **Reflect on How Their L1 is Related to Other Languages and Varieties:**
 - Compare linguistic features of their L1 with those of other languages they are familiar with.
 - Analyze how their L1 interacts with other languages or dialects in their environment (e.g., code-mixing or borrowing).
 - Present findings on the relationship between their L1 and global languages to show interconnectivity.

II- TEACHING METHODS:

- Chapter summaries
- Oral Presentations
- Class Discussions
- Practice Exercises

III- COURSE MATERIALS :

- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2021). *An Introduction to Language (11th ed.)*. Cengage Learning.
- Department of Linguistics, Ohio State University. (1991). *Language files: Materials for an introduction to language*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press
- O'Grady, W., Archibald, J., Aronoff, M., & Rees-Miller, J. (2019). *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction (7th ed.)*. Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Sadiqi, F. & Ennaji, M. (1999). *Introduction to Modern Linguistics*. Afrique-orient.
- Yule, G. (2016). *The Study of Language (6th ed.)*. Cambridge University Press

III- CONTENT :

Session 1 : Introduction to the course + definition of language

Content :

- Course overview
- Definition of language
- Importance of language study
- Characteristics of human language
- Discussion of course structure and assignments

Targeted Skills :

- Critical thinking
- Conceptual understanding of language
- Class participation and note-taking
- Analytical skills

Assignments :

- Read introductory materials on language definition

Session 2 : Origins of Language 1

Content :

- Theories on the origin of language
- Historical perspectives on language
- Evolutionary significance of language
- Debate: Did language evolve from gestures or sounds?
- Introduction to important figures in language evolution studies

Targeted Skills :

- Analytical thinking
- Debate and reasoning skills
- Historical contextualization
- Comparative analysis

Assignments:

- Research key scholars in language evolution and write a short summary

Session 3 : Origins of Language 2

Content :

- Continuation of language origin theories
- Language in the context of early human societies
- Role of communication in survival and adaptation
- Case studies: Evolution of language in different regions
- Introduction to anthropological linguistics

Targeted Skills :

- Critical analysis
- Application of anthropological theory
- Writing concise research summaries
- Understanding the role of language in culture

Assignments:

- Prepare a presentation on a specific theory of language origin

Session 4 : Properties of human language (Hockett's Design features)

Content :

- Explanation of Hockett's Design Features
- Detailed examination of the features
- Examples of how these features are present in modern languages
- Comparison of human language and animal communication
- Class discussion on the uniqueness of human language

Targeted Skills :

- Application of linguistic theory
- Identifying linguistic features in various languages
- Engaging in comparative discussions
- Analytical skills

Assignments:

- Write an essay comparing Hockett's Design Features with an example of animal communication

Session 5 : Animal communication vs. Human language

Content :

- Introduction to animal communication systems
- Characteristics of animal communication
- Key differences between animal communication and human language
- Video analysis: Communication in primates and birds
- Discussion: Can animals be taught human language?

Targeted Skills:

- Analytical thinking
- Research on animal behavior
- Comparative analysis of language systems
- Critical evaluation

Assignments:

- Research an example of animal communication and present it in class

Session 6 : Speech Vs Writing

- **Content:**
 - Differences between speech and writing
 - Historical development of writing systems
 - Cognitive processes involved in speaking vs. writing
 - The role of writing in language preservation
 - Group discussion: Advantages and limitations of both modes of communication
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Differentiation between communication modes
 - Writing skills enhancement
 - Presentation and discussion participation
 - Historical analysis
- **Assignments:**
 - Write a comparison of speech and writing in terms of communication effectiveness

Session 7 : Language change and history

- **Content:**
 - Overview of language change over time
 - Historical linguistics and its significance
 - Factors influencing language change: social, political, and cultural
 - Case study: The development of English from Old English to Modern English
 - Introduction to etymology and linguistic borrowing
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Understanding language evolution
 - Research on historical linguistics
 - Analyzing language through time
 - Recognizing patterns of language change
- **Assignments:**
 - Research the history of a specific word and its evolution through time

Session 8 : First language acquisition: developmental stages

- **Content:**
 - Introduction to first language acquisition
 - Stages of language development in children
 - Theories of language acquisition: Behaviorist, Innatist, Interactionist
 - Case studies: Examples of children's language development
 - Discussion: How do children learn complex grammar structures?
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Critical analysis of language development stages
 - Application of acquisition theories
 - Identifying language patterns in early childhood
 - Engaging in theoretical discussions
- **Assignments:**
 - Observe a child's language use and identify which stage they are in based on the developmental stages

Session 9 : Theories of 1st language acquisition 1

- **Content:**
 - Overview of key theories: Behaviorism and Innatism
 - Noam Chomsky's Universal Grammar theory
 - Strengths and limitations of both theories
 - Debate: Is language innate or learned?
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Understanding key language acquisition theories
 - Analyzing behaviorist and innatist perspectives
 - Engaging in debates with reasoned arguments
 - Critical evaluation of linguistic theories
- **Assignments:**
 - Write a comparative analysis of Skinner and Chomsky's theories

Session 10: Theories of 1st language acquisition 2

- **Content:**
 - Interactionist theory and its key proponents
 - The role of environment and social interaction in language learning
 - Case study: Language learning in bilingual environments
 - Discussion: The importance of interaction in language development
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Application of Interactionist theory
 - Analyzing real-life examples of language acquisition
 - Comparing different learning environments
 - Engaging in class discussions with critical insights
- **Assignments:**
 - Write a short essay on how social interaction influences language learning

Session 11 : Role of environment in language development

- **Content:**
 - The significance of environment in language learning
 - Cultural and social factors influencing language acquisition
 - The role of family, peers, and education
 - Case studies: Differences in language acquisition across cultures
 - Group discussion: How does environment affect bilingualism?
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Application of environmental factors in learning
 - Comparative analysis of cultural influences
 - Engaging in group discussions
 - Analytical thinking
- **Assignments:**
 - Prepare a case study presentation on how environment affects language development in different cultures
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Session 12 : Midterm Exam

- **Content:**
 - Review of key topics covered so far
 - Practice questions and preparation techniques
 - Exam structure and expectations
 - Group Q&A session for any clarifications
 - Final tips and advice for exam success
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Exam preparation and revision skills
 - Critical review of content
 - Group collaboration in Q&A
 - Time management during exams
- **Assignments:**
 - Study and review all previous topics for the midterm exam

Session 13 : Second Language Learning + Acquisition vs learning

- **Content:**
 - Introduction to second language acquisition (SLA)
 - Differences between acquisition and learning
 - Key theories of second language acquisition
 - Factors affecting success in SLA: motivation, age, exposure
 - Discussion: Can second language acquisition mimic first language acquisition?
- **Targeted Skills:**
 - Understanding SLA theories
 - Comparative analysis of acquisition vs. learning
 - Engaging in discussions with critical insights
 - Analyzing factors influencing SLA
- **Assignments:**
 - Write a short essay on the differences between acquisition and learning in language development

Session 14 : Factors affecting L2 learning

Content:

- Overview of individual and external factors influencing L2 learning
- Age, motivation, exposure, and cognitive factors
- Social and cultural influences on L2 learning
- Case study: How different learners approach L2 learning
- Discussion: The role of immersion in language learning

Targeted Skills:

- Application of L2 learning theories
- Analyzing case studies
- Engaging in group discussions on language learning factors
- Critical evaluation of learning methods

Assignments:

- Research and present on one factor that significantly impacts second language learning

Session 15: Theories of second language learning 1

Content:

- Introduction to key second language learning theories
- Behaviorist approaches to second language learning
- Contrast between first and second language learning
- Analysis of language learning strategies
- Discussion: Is language learning a conscious or subconscious process?

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding behaviorist theories in SLA
- Analyzing different language learning processes
- Critical thinking about language strategies
- Participating in class discussions

Assignments:

- Write a short paper on how behaviorist approaches can be applied to second language learning

Session 16: Theories of second language learning 2

- Content:**
- Cognitive and interactionist theories in second language learning
 - Krashen's Input Hypothesis and Monitor Model
 - Vygotsky's social interaction theory applied to SLA
 - Case study: The role of scaffolding in language learning
 - Group discussion: How do cognitive factors affect language learning?

Targeted Skills:

- Application of cognitive and interactionist theories

- Analyzing real-life examples of language learning
- Critical evaluation of language learning frameworks
- Group work and collaboration in discussions

- Assignments:**
- Prepare a presentation comparing cognitive and interactionist approaches to SLA

Session 17: Learner Language: Interlanguage

Content:

- Introduction to the concept of interlanguage
- Stages of interlanguage development in L2 learners
- Fossilization in second language learning
- Case studies: Analysis of common learner errors
- Discussion: How can teachers help learners progress beyond interlanguage?

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding and applying interlanguage theory
- Identifying learner errors and their causes
- Problem-solving strategies in language teaching
- Engaging in case study analysis

Assignments:

- Write a report on the significance of interlanguage and how it affects second language learning

Session 18: L1 influence on L2 learning

Content:

- The role of the first language (L1) in second language acquisition
- Positive and negative transfer from L1 to L2
- Cross-linguistic influences: Phonology, grammar, and vocabulary
- Case study: Examples of L1 interference in L2 learning
- Discussion: How can teachers minimize negative transfer?

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding cross-linguistic influences
- Analyzing the impact of L1 on L2 learning
- Problem-solving in teaching L2 learners
- Engaging in group discussions

Assignments:

- Write a short essay on how L1 transfer can affect L2 learning and strategies to address it

Session 19: Contrastive analysis hypothesis and error analysis

Content:

- Introduction to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
- Predicting learner errors through contrastive analysis
- Error analysis in second language learning
- Practical applications of error analysis in teaching
- Group discussion: Is error analysis more effective than contrastive analysis?

Targeted Skills:

- Applying contrastive analysis to real-world language learning
- Conducting error analysis on learner data
- Developing teaching strategies based on learner errors
- Engaging in critical discussions

Assignments:

- Analyze a sample of learner errors and provide feedback based on contrastive analysis

Session 20: Language & culture

Content:

- The relationship between language and culture
- Cultural influences on language use and communication styles
- Case studies: Language and cultural norms in various societies
- Discussion: How does language reflect cultural values?
- Introduction to sociolinguistics

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding the intersection of language and culture
- Analyzing case studies of cultural language differences
- Developing cross-cultural communication skills
- Engaging in sociolinguistic discussions

Assignments:

- Research a specific language and its cultural influences, and present your findings

Session 21: Language and identity/gender

Content:

- The connection between language and identity
- Gender differences in language use
- Language as a marker of social identity
- Case studies: Gendered communication patterns in different societies
- Discussion: Does language shape gender roles, or vice versa?

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding language as a social identity marker
- Analyzing gendered language use
- Critical evaluation of language and gender theories
- Engaging in reflective discussions

Assignments:

- Write an essay on how language reflects or reinforces gender identities in different cultures

Session 22: Language and thought (Sapir Whorf Hypothesis)

Content:

- Overview of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis
- Linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity
- Case studies: Language and perception of reality
- Debate: Does language shape thought, or does thought shape language?
- Group discussion on the implications of linguistic relativity

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding linguistic determinism and relativity
- Applying the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis to real-world scenarios
- Critical thinking about the role of language in shaping perception
- Engaging in class debates

Assignments:

- Write a reflective essay on how the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis applies to a specific language

Session 23: Language contact: language varieties

Content:

- The impact of language contact on language development
- Pidgins, creoles, and language varieties
- Code-switching and language mixing
- Case studies: Examples of language varieties in multilingual societies
- Discussion: How do language varieties enrich linguistic diversity?

Targeted Skills:

- Understanding language contact phenomena
- Analyzing the development of pidgins and creoles
- Identifying and discussing the role of code-switching
- Engaging in group discussions on multilingualism

Assignments:

- Research a pidgin or creole and present its linguistic and cultural significance

Session 24: General Review

Content:

- Review of key topics from the course
- Group discussions on major linguistic theories
- Practice questions for the final exam
- Q&A session to address any remaining concerns
- Final tips and strategies for exam preparation

Targeted Skills:

- Exam preparation and revision
- Summarizing key course concepts
- Collaboration in group review sessions
- Critical reflection on the course content

Assignments:

- Study and prepare for the final exam, focusing on weak areas

Final exam: Format, duration

Materials

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ASSESSMENT

Final exam 60%

Continuous assessment 40%

- Presentation/Case presentation
- Case studies and assignments
- Participation
- Attendance 5%