

# Linguistics Outside the Classroom: Talks and Experiments

## Linguistics 3701

### Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LINGUISTICS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM REQUIREMENT?

A. Understanding how researchers investigate different aspects of language processing is an important part of this class. One of the best ways to understand this research is to actually participate in an experiment or to hear researchers speak about their work. Therefore, participation in the Linguistics Outside the Classroom (LOC) program is a requirement for all students in every section of Linguistics 3701. If you participate in a linguistics experiment, you'll experience one way that linguists study language, and you'll learn about current research being conducted here at OSU. If you attend a linguistics presentation, you'll learn about current topics and methods in linguistic research.

### Q. HOW DO I FULFILL THIS REQUIREMENT?

A. By doing one of the following three things:

- Participating in two experiments and completing the accompanying questionnaires
- Attending two talks and completing the accompanying questionnaires  
(Please note that occasionally there may be video showings that count toward the talk requirement; however, you may attend only one video in place of a talk. You may **not** go to two video showings in order to fulfill the LOC requirement.)
- Attending one talk (or video showing) and participating in one experiment, and completing the appropriate questionnaire for each.

➤ If your schedule will make these options impossible, you must ask your instructor **by the third week of class** about an alternative written assignment that you can complete instead.

### Q. HOW DOES THE LOC REQUIREMENT AFFECT MY GRADE?

A. Each presentation or experiment is worth 2.5% of your total course grade. Thus, this requirement is worth a combined total of 5%.

### Q. WHEN IS THE REQUIREMENT DUE?

A. The first completed questionnaire from a presentation or experiment is due during the eighth week of the semester (fourth week in seven week courses). The second completed questionnaire will be due during the last week of classes. Your instructor will inform you about the specific time during those weeks that the questionnaires are due. You may, of course, turn in either or both of your questionnaires early.

Please note that even though the questionnaires are due in the eighth and last weeks, because there is limited availability of experiment slots, it is not possible for every student to wait to fill the requirement during those weeks. There is usually at least one experiment running at all times, and there are presentations scheduled regularly throughout the semester. Therefore, please plan ahead to find opportunities that work well with your schedule, rather than waiting until the last minute.

**Q. HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT TALKS THAT I CAN ATTEND?**

- A. Check the list posted at <http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/courses/2000/talks.html>. This web page will list all of the presentations that will take place during a semester that satisfy the requirement. The list should be finalized within the first two weeks of the semester. (Although there will be other talks hosted by the linguistics department during the semester, and although you are encouraged to attend them if you are interested, only the presentations that are posted on this web site can be attended for credit as a part of the LOC requirement.) You do not need to sign up before attending a talk.

**Q. HOW DO I SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE IN LINGUISTICS EXPERIMENTS?**

- A. Visit <http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/research/experiments/> and click on the name of an experiment. To sign up, click the “Sign Up” link that lines up with a time that is convenient for you. On the new page, enter your name and contact information, and your instructor’s last name, select 3701(H) as your course number, and click the “Sign Up” box. Remember to write down the time and place for yourself, and be sure to arrive on time. If you arrive even five minutes late, you may be unable to participate in the experiment.

**Q. WHAT IF I WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXPERIMENT BUT I CAN’T MAKE ANY OF THE POSTED EXPERIMENT TIMES?**

- A. For some experiments, it may be possible to schedule an appointment with the experimenter outside of the posted time slots. Use the contact information that is posted at the sign-up page to make an appointment. Even weekend and evening hours can sometimes be arranged this way.

**Q. WHAT IF I SIGN UP FOR AN EXPERIMENT AND THEN HAVE TO CANCEL?**

- A. Please e-mail or phone the experimenter to say that you are not coming as soon as you are aware of a conflict! (The experimenter’s contact information can be found on the web page where you signed up.) Canceling appointments at the last minute or failing to show up is not only inconsiderate to the person running the experiment, but also it decreases the availability of future slots for you and your peers. **If no-shows become a problem, we may have to institute a policy such that students who do not show up to experiments are unable to receive credit for the LOC requirement.**

**Q. WHERE DO I GET THE QUESTIONNAIRES THAT I HAVE TO COMPLETE, AND HOW DO I TURN THEM IN?**

- A. When you attend a **presentation**, questionnaires will be distributed at the beginning of the talk either by the speaker or by a member of the linguistics department staff. **The speaker or staff member will then collect the completed questionnaires from you as you leave**, and s/he will give them to your instructor.

When you participate in an **experiment**, the experimenter will give you the questionnaire when you leave, and **it is your responsibility to turn the completed questionnaire in to your instructor** by the due date.

Example questionnaires are attached at the end of this handout.

**Q. I'VE NEVER BEEN TO AN ACADEMIC TALK BEFORE. WHAT CAN I EXPECT?**

- A. Depending on the presentation that you attend, there may be a moderator who introduces the speaker, or a speaker may introduce him or herself. The speaker will then present to you information about their research.

Speakers are invited to talk for a full hour. Note that speakers may be invited guests of the department and the university. Please be considerate of them and the other members of the audience. **You should attend a presentation only if you can stay for the entire time.**

After the talk, if there is a moderator, s/he will thank the speaker and invite the audience to stay for a question and answer period which last for an additional ten to thirty minutes. If you need to leave before the question and answer period, the moderator will give you an appropriate opportunity to turn in your form and leave before the questions begin. If it is not a moderated talk, the speaker will likely lead his or her own question and answer session, which may or may not fit within the designated hour. Either way, you will have an opportunity to turn in your questionnaire and leave at the end of the hour.

If you stay for the question and answer period, feel free to ask questions! Our speakers are there to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with our undergraduates, and they will be happy to hear about what interests you. Don't be afraid if you have little experience with linguistics: everyone in the audience will come from a slightly different background, and all questions will be welcome!

**Q. WON'T THESE TOPICS BE TOO ADVANCED FOR ME?**

- A. **FOR TALKS:** All of the posted talks are geared toward our undergraduate students. When you attend a talk, don't worry about trying to understand everything that a speaker talks about. Even professors and graduate students attend talks in order to learn about topics that are new to them. Do try to listen for the main points of the talk and think about the reasons why a specific piece of linguistic data is being used.

**FOR EXPERIMENTS:** It is not necessary to have any linguistics background to participate in an experiment! At the end of an experiment, the experimenter will talk with you about what he or she is trying to learn, and you'll have the opportunity to ask any questions that you might have. You'll also be given a written explanation that you can take with you. Experimenters understand that you are coming from an introductory-level class, and that you might be participating before having learned about the area of linguistics that they are studying, so they will be prepared to explain their research to you.

Even though you will be told about what an experimenter is studying after you finish participating in the experiment, please do not discuss this information with classmates who have not participated in the experiment yet, since doing so may spoil the data that they provide when they participate.

**Q. I HAVE A DISABILITY. WILL I BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THIS REQUIREMENT?**

- A. Yes. All of the talks are given in accessible classrooms, and most experiments are also accessible. If necessary, the alternative written assignment may also be available for you to complete instead of going to talks or experiments. If you have any specific concerns about your ability to fulfill this requirement based on your particular circumstances, please speak with your instructor.

**Q. ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN EXPERIMENTS?**

A. The only restriction on experiment participation is age. Due to federal guidelines, anyone who is under the age of 18 must have parental permission to participate in experiments. If you are under the age of 18 and would like to participate in experiments to fulfill this requirement, you must ask your parents to sign a parental permission form and bring the signed form with you to the experiment. You can obtain a parental permission form by contacting the experimenter of the study you would like to participate.

If you are under the age of 18, you can also fulfill this requirement by attending two talks. If necessary, the alternative written assignment may also be available for you. If you have any specific concerns about your ability to fulfill this requirement based on your particular circumstances, please speak with your instructor.

**Q. WHAT IS A 2-CREDIT EXPERIMENT?**

A: Sometimes it is impossible for experimenters to collect the data they need in a single one-hour session. 2-credit experiments are experiments that require a commitment of more than one hour on one day, or one hour on each of two separate days. As the name suggests, completion of such experiments is worth 2 credits rather than just 1. If you complete a 2-credit experiment before the first deadline, you have earned both credits required for the semester.

## Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board

An entity called the Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (SBSIRB) has established guidelines for the ethical treatment of human participants in social and behavioral science research. Here at OSU, the SBSIRB is part of the Office of Responsible Research Practices. All of the experiments that you will be invited to participate in will have been reviewed by the SBSIRB before the sign-up sheets are posted.

Included among the guidelines that ensure the proper treatment of human participants are the following:

- (a) The experience may provide an educational benefit to the participant, and if it does, it must be applied equally to a “population.” This second part means that if it is required in one 3701 section, it must be required in all.
- (b) There must be an equally palatable alternative assignment. For this assignment, students have the option of attending a talk instead of participating in an experiment.
- (c) Students must understand what their rights are as participants in experiments. This means that when you arrive at an experiment, you will be told that you have the right to stop participating in an experiment at any time, without penalty.
- (d) Participants must be given a full explanation of the purpose of the research following their participation. This means that after each experiment, you will be “debriefed.” As soon as you’ve completed an experiment, someone will talk to you and provide you with a written explanation about the experiment. Experimenters are willing to answer any questions that you have about the experiment. Please feel free to ask.

If you have any questions about the Linguistics Outside of the Classroom: Talks and Experiments requirement, you may contact the following people:

Kiwako Ito, Department of Linguistics  
[ito.19@osu.edu](mailto:ito.19@osu.edu), 614-292-9752

Ms. Sandra Meadows  
Office of Responsible Research Practices  
292-6950

**EXAMPLE OF THE EXPERIMENT PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE AT AN EXPERIMENT. ONLY FORMS THAT ARE OBTAINED AT AN EXPERIMENT AND SIGNED BY THE EXPERIMENTER ARE VALID.**

**3701 RESEARCH PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 3701 Instructor \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of participation \_\_\_\_\_ Experiment name \_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's name \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer each of the following 5 questions in a few sentences. Feel free to use the front and back of this sheet to answer questions 1–4. Write your answer to question 5 in the designated space at the bottom of the page. Please don't forget to number your answers.**

1. *(A question about the experiment will be inserted by the experimenter.)*
  2. *(A question about the experiment will be inserted by the experimenter.)*
  3. Think about the experimental design: What were the independent and dependent variables?
  4. Please identify one experiment you have discussed in your class or read about in your textbook that is similar to this one. (You may give the authors' names and the date, or describe the materials used and results found.) Compare the two experiments. What is one way in which they are similar or different?
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5. What improvements would you suggest the experimenter make?

**EXAMPLE OF THE TALK ATTENDANCE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE AT A TALK. ONLY FORMS THAT ARE RECEIVED AND TURNED IN AT TALKS ARE VALID.**

**PRESENTATION ATTENDANCE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_ Title of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer each of the following 4 questions in a few sentences. Feel free to use the front and back of this sheet to answer questions 1–3. Write your answer to question 4 in the designated space at the bottom of the page. Please don't forget to number your answers.**

1. *(A question about the talk will be inserted by the speaker.)*
  2. *(A question about the talk will be inserted by the speaker.)*
  3. Share one way the content of this presentation relates to what you have been learning in class; please provide a thoughtful explanation.
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4. How would you suggest the speaker improve their talk?