

Linguistics Major Assessment Report

Fall 2017

Please download this document and provide a response to each question in the appropriate section. Send your assessment reports to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Melissa Jordine (mjordine@csufresno.edu). (Reports can be sent to Dr. Jordine via campus mail to mailstop SS 21). Please complete a separate report for each B.A/B.S. and M.A/M.S. program offered by the department.

1. What learning outcome(s) did you assess this year? List all program outcomes you assessed (if you assessed an outcome not listed on your department SOAP please indicate explain). Do not describe the measures or benchmarks in this section Also please only describe major assessment activities in this report. No GE assessment was required for the 2016-2017 academic year.

We assessed the following learning outcomes for one undergraduate course and one graduate course in the 2016-2017 academic year.

SLO: Describe what is known about how language is acquired. (Objective B7)

Ling 165 Language Acquisition

SLO: Demonstrate knowledge of language structure and use. (Objective 1.1)

Ling 243 Graduate Seminar in Syntax

2. What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment? If the assignment (activity, survey, etc.) does not correspond to the activities indicated in the timeline on the SOAP, please indicate why. Please clearly indicate how the assignment/survey is able to measure a specific outcome. If after evaluating the assessment you concluded that the measure was not clearly aligned or did not adequately measure the outcome please discuss this in your report. Please include the benchmark or standard for student performance in your assessment report (if it is stated in your SOAP then this information can just be copied into the report). An example of an expectation or standard would be “On outcome 2.3 we expected at least 80% of students to achieve a score of 3 or above on the rubric.”

Ling 165 Language Acquisition, Fall 2016

The SLO assessed relates to Student Learning Outcomes Objective B7 – **Describe what is known about how language is acquired.**

The final exam was used to assess this learning outcome. The final exam included multiple choice questions, short-answer questions, problem solving, and data analysis, which measured the following specific learning outcomes from the syllabus:

- Understand and describe the nature and the process of second language acquisition from

linguistic, psychological and social perspectives.

- Understand and describe some of the basic methods in first and second language research.
- Compare and contrast different theories of language acquisition.

Ling 243 Graduate Seminar in Syntax, Spring 2017

The SLO assessed relates to Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 2 from the Ling 243 Syllabus, Spring 2017:

Students should be able to:

- 1) Explain the systematic syntactic nature of language.
- 2) Provide evidence and argumentation to show that words, phrases, and clauses form constituents and describe how these constituents function in the world's languages.

Assignments: The student learning outcomes were assessed through written data squib.

Data Squib:

Students will be expected to write a squib (a short research paper) using novel data and to analyze this data using a Minimalist framework. Topic must be approved prior to beginning this project.

This is an exercise in applying what we learn in class to real language data. To that end, students will choose a phenomenon in a language other than English. Find four pieces of data (four examples) that show either complex sentences (one with more than one verb), valency changing morphology (in simple sentences), complex DPs (one that projects argument structure), or other relevant syntactic phenomenon. Write a short squib (5 – 10 pages) discussing your examples. The paper should include an introduction, a brief review of any relevant literature, a brief discussion as to where your examples came from, and a syntactic analysis (i.e. a tree or trees). Discuss your analysis and provide an explanation of what you believe is occurring in your examples (i.e. in your tree(s)).

3. **What did you discover from the data?** Discuss the student performance in relation to your standards or expectations. Be sure to clearly indicate how many students did (or did not) meet the standard for each outcome measured. Where possible, indicate the relative strengths and weaknesses in student performance on the outcome(s).

Ling 165 Language Acquisition

A total of 27 students took this course in Fall 2016. All 27 students completed the final exam. 14 students passed the final exam with an A (51%), 7 students received B (26%), 3 students received a C (11%), and 3 students failed (11%).

Ling 243 Graduate Seminar in Syntax

The 7 students in the seminar all submitted data squibs at the end of the semester. The data squibs were submitted via assignment submission in Blackboard. The papers ranged from 7 to 10 pages in length and covered a wide range of topics on phrasal and clausal structure, and morpho-syntactic phenomena in a wide variety of languages, per the guidelines. All of the papers addressed Student Learning Outcome 1 “Explain the systematic syntactic nature of language.” 5 of the 7 papers fully addressed Student Learning Outcome 2 “Provide evidence

and argumentation to show that words, phrases, and clauses form constituents and describe how these constituents function in the world's languages." Two of the 7 papers provided only partial evidence and argumentation to adequately show how the constituent structures they discuss function within the overall grammatical system of the language.

4. What changes did you make as a result of the data? Describe how the information from the assessment activity was reviewed and what action was taken based on the analysis of the assessment data.

Ling 165 Language Acquisition

The assessment results from the final exam suggest that the majority of the students (88%) successfully achieved the learning outcomes, i.e. demonstrate good knowledge on how language is learned and that a small proportion of students (11%) failed.

Improvement could be made in the following areas in terms of assessment:

- (1) Include more in-class quiz activities to frequently keep track of student learning. This is to engage student learning in classroom as well as help students prepare for the multiple choice and short-answer types of questions in the exam(s).
- (2) Include more data analysis activities in class to prepare students to answer data analysis questions in the exam(s).
- (3) Include discussion forums to encourage and engage students to applying theoretical knowledge to real life language acquisition issues.

Ling 243 Graduate Seminar in Syntax

Homework will be assigned prior to the data squib submission that will require the students to submit partial analyses of their data. This will allow students to assess the adequacy of their evidence and argumentation that relate data to theory throughout the semester prior to submitting the final data squib. This way, students will have the opportunity throughout the semester, in "smaller batches", to provide evidence and argumentation to show that words, phrases, and clauses form constituents and describe how these constituents function in the language overall (Student Learning Objective 2). This will be implemented in the Spring 2018 Ling 243 seminar to improve performance on Student Learning Outcome 2.

5. What assessment activities will you be conducting in the 2017-2018 AY? List the outcomes and measures or assessment activities you will use to evaluate them. These activities should be the same as those indicated on your current SOAP timeline; if they are not please explain.

We plan to assess the following outcomes and courses in 2017 – 2018.

Ling 143 Syntax

Learning outcomes A3: Demonstrate knowledge of sentence patterns (syntax) and how to analyze syntactic data.

Final term paper will be used to assess this learning outcome.

Ling 265 Graduate Seminar in Language Acquisition

Goal 3: Produce a research paper which demonstrate ability to carry out independent empirical, experimental, or theoretical research.

Objective 3.1 Critically review relevant literature theoretically and empirically.

Objective 3.2 Utilize appropriate methodology to collect data, interpret the data, and discuss theoretical implications.

Final term paper will be used to assess this learning outcome.

6. What progress have you made on items from your last program review action plan? Please provide a brief description of progress made on each item listed in the action plan. If no progress has been made on an action item, simply state “no progress.”

BA and MA program action plan

The most recent program review (2016) made the following recommendations in curriculum development and the department has made efforts to address each of them.

(1) “The development of new graduate courses in research methods, language structures for teachers, a survey of applied linguistics, a morphology course, and a semantics course in the future.”

- Dr. John Boyle has developed and offered an undergraduate *Morphology* course last year and this course is also going to be offered in Spring 2018.
- The department conducted a search for a linguist specialized in TESL and applied linguistics in 2016-2017. We successfully hired Dr. Jaydene Elvan and she just started here this fall. Dr. Elvan will contribute to the development of graduate courses in research method, language structure courses for teachers, and applied linguistics.
- The department requested to hire a tenure-track faculty member who is specialized in semantics. This search has been approved and we are conducting this search this year.

(2) “making TESOL option more general and applying it to teaching subsequent languages other than English”

This suggestion is intriguing. One issue is that the MA in TESOL is a recognized degree that is important to our graduates when they seek jobs after graduating.

(3) “Culminating Experiences and Student Direction”

- The department faculty expressed interest in getting more information about the Project option for the students in the TESOL option and we discussed the possibility of including TESL internship as a possible program culminating experience.

Additional Guidelines: If you have not fully described the assignment then please attach a copy of the questions or assignment guidelines. If you are using a rubric and did not fully describe this rubric (or the criteria being used) than please attach a copy of the rubric. If you administered a survey please consider attaching a copy of the survey so that the Learning Assessment Team (LAT) can review the questions.