



TRAN854

Linguistics of Signed Languages

S1 External 2015

Dept of Linguistics

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Della Goswell

della.goswell@mq.edu.au

Contact via della.goswell@mq.edu.au

Unit Convenor

Trevor Johnston

trevor.johnston@mq.edu.au

Contact via trevor.johnston@mq.edu.au

Lecturer

Lori Whynot

lori.whynot@mq.edu.au

Contact via lori.whynot@mq.edu.au

Margaret Wood

margaret.wood@mq.edu.au

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MAuslEngInt or PGDipAuslEngInt or GradDipAuslEngInt

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces students to the linguistics of signed languages, with particular reference to Auslan. The unit focuses on language structure (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) and language acquisition and psycholinguistics. The use of signed language corpora in the description of language structure is a central theme of this unit and major corpus-based findings related to language variation and use (sociolinguistics) and language change (historical linguistics) are presented and explored. In addition, students learn how to build a corpus and to apply their existing and newly acquired linguistic knowledge to the computerised annotation and analysis of signed languages.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are

available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe phonological parameters of signs and basic phonological processes
- Explain characteristics of signed lexicons, including established and productive signs, distribution of signs, visual motivation and metaphor, citation v. inflected forms
- Describe morphological structures of signed languages, including grammatical roles, types of verbs, adverbial and aspectual inflection, processes of sign formation
- Identify issues in word order, and explain aspects of simultaneity in sign language structure including the role of space, non-manual features, and mouthing
- Describe evidence and reasons for internal variation and change in signed languages (especially Auslan), in relation to social factors of signers, and language contact
- Describe key milestones in the acquisition of signed language as a first language and key issues in Deaf people's bilingualism
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters
(For students with a prior knowledge of Auslan only) demonstrate the ability to gloss and annotate Auslan data using ELAN software

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Reading Summaries	20%	12/05/2013
ELAN annotation	35%	03/06/2013
iLearn Participation	10%	16/06/2013
Final Assessment	35%	16/06/2013

Reading Summaries

Due: **12/05/2013**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will be assessed on 4 reading summaries, each worth 5 points, for a total of 20 points.

These summaries are worth 20% of the total term grade.

Each week in iLearn there are reading assignments, and every two or three weeks a selected reading will be assigned that require synthesis, summary, and application to interpreting. Each summary is assessed using a rubric (see Assessment Criteria document link in iLearn).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe key milestones in the acquisition of signed language as a first language and key issues in Deaf people's bilingualism
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters

ELAN annotation

Due: **03/06/2013**

Weighting: **35%**

Students will be required to analyze a short video text in Auslan using annotation software, ELAN.

This assignment will be graded based on several criteria (See Assessment Guide) where demonstrated ability to identify distinct Auslan signs, their lexical, non-lexical, and partially-lexical status, as well as analysis of other features in the Auslan sample.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- (For students with a prior knowledge of Auslan only) demonstrate the ability to gloss and annotate Auslan data using ELAN software

iLearn Participation

Due: **16/06/2013**

Weighting: **10%**

Participation evidenced throughout semester in Forums, activities, and during teaching block. Students must log on and participate in the first week.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe evidence and reasons for internal variation and change in signed languages (especially Auslan), in relation to social factors of signers, and language contact
- Describe key milestones in the acquisition of signed language as a first language and key issues in Deaf people's bilingualism

- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters

Final Assessment

Due: **16/06/2013**

Weighting: **35%**

A review of the content of the course and consideration of 15 questions that may appear in the take-home exam (the list of 15 questions will be available from June 7). Students will have 5 days to formulate and submit answers to 7 final revealed and required questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe phonological parameters of signs and basic phonological processes
- Explain characteristics of signed lexicons, including established and productive signs, distribution of signs, visual motivation and metaphor, citation v. inflected forms
- Describe morphological structures of signed languages, including grammatical roles, types of verbs, adverbial and aspectual inflection, processes of sign formation
- Identify issues in word order, and explain aspects of simultaneity in sign language structure including the role of space, non-manual features, and mouthing
- Describe evidence and reasons for internal variation and change in signed languages (especially Auslan), in relation to social factors of signers, and language contact
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Delivery and Resources

Teaching and Learning Strategies

The learning and teaching strategies used in this Unit are centred on single 5-day teaching block located on campus at Macquarie University. It will comprise of approximately 25 hours of class contact, divided into 90 minute sessions. A particular aspect of signed language linguistics will serve as the focus in each session. Each session will typically comprise of a lecture with time for discussion or activities. This is complemented by interaction with iLearn discussion throughout the semester.

It is expected that students in this unit will read the set text book, and the materials posted on iLearn for download, attend the teaching block, participate in the annotation and analysis of Auslan video texts in the Auslan digital video laboratory (the later for students with a prior

knowledge of Auslan only). They will also produce written work as detailed in the assessment schedule, including an annotation file in ELAN (again, the later for students with a prior knowledge of Auslan only).

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe phonological parameters of signs and basic phonological processes
- Explain characteristics of signed lexicons, including established and productive signs, distribution of signs, visual motivation and metaphor, citation v. inflected forms
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- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters
- (For students with a prior knowledge of Auslan only) demonstrate the ability to gloss and

annotate Auslan data using ELAN software

Assessment tasks

- Reading Summaries
- iLearn Participation
- Final Assessment

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Explain distinctions between language and language modalities; natural sign languages and artificial sign systems; and signs and gestures
- Describe evidence and reasons for internal variation and change in signed languages (especially Auslan), in relation to social factors of signers, and language contact
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters

Assessment tasks

- Reading Summaries
- iLearn Participation
- Final Assessment

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters
- (For students with a prior knowledge of Auslan only) demonstrate the ability to gloss and

annotate Auslan data using ELAN software

Assessment task

- ELAN annotation

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Demonstrate the ability to synthesise and critically comment on literature on signed languages, and to consider implications for sign language interpreters

Assessment tasks

- Reading Summaries
- iLearn Participation
- Final Assessment