LING3391

Forensic Linguistics

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

Department of Linguistics

Contents

General Information	2
Learning Outcomes	2
General Assessment Information	3
Assessment Tasks	4
Delivery and Resources	7
Policies and Procedures	7
Inclusion and Diversity	9
Professionalism	9

Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Maria Herke
maria.herke@mq.edu.au

Felicity Cox
felicity.cox@mq.edu.au

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
50cp at 2000 level or above including 10cp of LING units at 2000 level

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
Forensic linguistics is a diverse, rapidly-growing field that applies linguistic knowledge and methods to the forensic context of law, language, crime investigation, and judicial procedure. This unit covers the various sub-fields and issues of forensic linguistics, such as, key theoretical and methodological approaches within the field, the work of the forensic linguist, the sub-field of forensic phonetics including speaker identification and voice comparison, authorship attribution of written texts, the linguistic investigation of plagiarism, and the linguist as an expert witness. Key outcomes of the unit are the ability to understand and describe basic concepts and theories in forensic linguistics, to demonstrate basic knowledge of a wide range of issues in forensic linguistics both in the national and international context. Students will have the opportunity to critically observe and linguistically describe relevant evidential data, as well as to analyse linguistic evidence in a scientific manner.

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:

ULO1: Describe key theoretical and methodological approaches within the field of forensic linguistics.

ULO2: Demonstrate basic knowledge of a wide range of issues in forensic linguistics in both the national and the international context.

ULO3: Critically observe relevant evidential data, and linguistically describe and characterise it.

ULO4: Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to analyse linguistic evidence in a scientific manner.

General Assessment Information

Grade descriptors and other information concerning grading are contained in the Macquarie University Assessment Policy.

All final grades are determined by a grading committee, in accordance with the Macquarie University Assessment Policy, and are not the sole responsibility of the Unit Convenors.

Students will be awarded a final grade and a mark which must correspond to the grade descriptors specified in the Assessment Procedure (clause 128).

To pass this unit, you must demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes, meet any ungraded requirements, and achieve a final mark of 50 or better.

Further details for each assessment task will be available on iLearn.

Late Submissions

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (OF THE TOTAL POSSIBLE MARK) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a grade of '0' will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical concern.

For example:

Number of days (hours) late	Total Possible Marks	Deduction	Raw mark	Final mark
1 day (1-24 hours)	100	5	75	70
2 days (24-48 hours)	100	10	75	65
3 days (48-72 hours)	100	15	75	60
7 days (144-168 hours)	100	35	75	40
>7 days (>168 hours)	100	-	75	0

Late submissions for an assessment task will not be accepted once that assessment task has been marked and returned to students.

Late submission of time sensitive tasks, such as timetabled tests/exams, scheduled performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs, will be addressed by the Unit Convenors in a Special Consideration application.

Use of Generative AI

Please refer to instructions from your Unit Convenors on the use and acknowledgement of use of Generative AI in your submitted assignments.

Special Consideration

If you are unable to complete an assessment task on or by the specified date due circumstances that are unexpected, unavoidable, significantly disruptive and beyond your control, you may apply for special consideration in accordance with the special consideration policy. Applications for special consideration must be supported by appropriate evidence and submitted via ask.mq.edu.au.

1. You should only attempt an exam if you are well enough to do so. Note: Special Consideration is not normally granted if an exam has already been attempted. If you are unfit/unable to attempt the exam due to an eligible disruption, please do not attempt the exam. For information regarding Special Consideration and how attempting an exam will impact your application, refer to the Special Consideration webpage

2. In the event of illness or significant disruptions during an examination, you must promptly cease your work. If the incident occurs in an invigilated exam setting, you must inform the supervisor or invigilator immediately. If the disruption takes place outside an invigilated setting (e.g. non-invigilated timed assessment), it should be reported immediately to the appropriate course authority. Subsequently, you should promptly consult the Special Consideration webpage to review the FAQs and eligibility requirements and follow the steps to apply.

3. If you attempt an exam or timed assessment without reporting any issues during the assessment process to the supervisor or invigilator (in the case of invigilated exam) or appropriate course authority (unit convenor for example in the case of non-invigilated exam) and then apply for Special Consideration based on illness during the exam, the application will generally not be considered.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Presentation	25%	No	31/8/25		No	
Proposal for Forensic Linguistic case study	30%	No	12/10/25		No	

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Forensic linguistc case study	45%	No	9/ 11/ 25		No	

Presentation

Assessment Type [1]: Presentation
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 25 hours
Due: **31/8/25**
Weighting: **25%**
Groupwork/Individual:
Short extension [3]: No
AI Approach:

You will prepare and present, via video, a summary of a self-selected journal article in an area of forensic linguistics of interest.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe key theoretical and methodological approaches within the field of forensic linguistics.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of a wide range of issues in forensic linguistics in both the national and the international context.

Proposal for Forensic Linguistic case study

Assessment Type [1]: Report
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 20 hours
Due: **12/10/25**
Weighting: **30%**
Groupwork/Individual:
Short extension [3]: No
AI Approach:

You will present a written plan for a proposed Forensic Linguistic analysis case study. You will nominate a forensic linguistic issue/ problem from the national or international context and you will also nominate your proposed audience. You will outline the linguistic evidence, either sourced or collected, and a relevant methodology that you propose to use to address the nominated issue.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe key theoretical and methodological approaches within the field of forensic linguistics.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of a wide range of issues in forensic linguistics in both the national and the international context.
- Critically observe relevant evidential data, and linguistically describe and characterise it.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to analyse linguistic evidence in a scientific manner.

Forensic linguistc case study

Assessment Type [1]: Case study/analysis
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 40 hours
Due: **9/11/25**
Weighting: **45%**
Groupwork/Individual:
Short extension [3]: No
AI Approach:

You will analyse the linguistic evidence using the methodology, both of which were outlined in your earlier proposal in Assessment 2. Drawing on evidence and theoretical approaches from the unit and literature, you will then write up your findings in the style of a professional expert witness report for your proposed audience.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of a wide range of issues in forensic linguistics in both the national and the international context.
- Critically observe relevant evidential data, and linguistically describe and characterise it.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to analyse linguistic evidence in a scientific manner.

---

[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- Academic Success for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment

task and is subject to individual variation.

[3] An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the Service Connect Portal.

Delivery and Resources

Seminar and lecture content will delivered to you in a mix of face to face and online lectures. There will be some weeks where we need to deliver via zoom or pre-recordings, so please check your announcements on ilearn regularly. If you wish to chat with myself (Maria), then do please email and we can organise a Zoom meeting. You will ahve opportunities throughout the semester to have one on one zoom appointments to help plan and approach you assessments.

•Readings will be placed in Leganto

•Recommended texts:

•Coulthard, M., & Johnson, A. (2010). The Routledge handbook of forensic linguistics . Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ;: Routledge.

••Coulthard, M., Johnson, A. & Wright, D. (2017). An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics. Language in Evidence.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

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

Academic Success

Academic Success provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault

- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the Service Connect Portal, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Inclusion and Diversity

Social inclusion at Macquarie University is about giving everyone who has the potential to benefit from higher education the opportunity to study at university, participate in campus life and flourish in their chosen field. The University has made significant moves to promote an equitable, diverse and exciting campus community for the benefit of staff and students. It is your responsibility to contribute towards the development of an inclusive culture and practice in the areas of learning and teaching, research, and service orientation and delivery. As a member of the Macquarie University community, you must not discriminate against or harass others based on their sex, gender, race, marital status, carers' responsibilities, disability, sexual orientation, age, political conviction or religious belief. All staff and students are expected to display appropriate behaviour that is conducive to a healthy learning environment for everyone.

Professionalism

In the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, professionalism is a key capability embedded in all our courses.

As part of developing professionalism, students are expected to attend all small group interactive sessions including clinical, practical, laboratory, work-integrated learning (e.g., PACE placements), and team-based learning activities. Some learning activities are recorded (e.g., face-to-face lectures), however you are encouraged to avoid relying upon such material as they do not recreate the whole learning experience and technical issues can and do occur. As an adult learner, we respect your decision to choose how you engage with your learning, but we would remind you that the learning opportunities we create for you have been done so to enable your success, and that by not engaging you may impact your ability to successfully complete this unit. We equally expect that you show respect for the academic staff who have worked hard to develop meaningful activities and prioritise your learning by communicating with them in advance if you are unable to attend a small group interactive session.

Another dimension of professionalism is having respect for your peers. It is the right of every student to learn in an environment that is free of disruption and distraction. Please arrive to all

learning activities on time, and if you are unavoidably detained, please join activity as quietly as possible to minimise disruption. Phones and other electronic devices that produce noise and other distractions must be turned off prior to entering class. Where your own device (e.g., laptop) is being used for class-related activities, you are asked to close down all other applications to avoid distraction to you and others. Please treat your fellow students with the utmost respect. If you are uncomfortable participating in any specific activity, please let the relevant academic know.

Unit information based on version 2025.02 of the Handbook