

Course Information Sheet
Ling 599.46: Grammatical gender – every which way

Fall 2012: Location: SS 819 Monday - 15:00-17:50

Instructor's Name: Professor Susanne Carroll

Instructor's e-mail carrolls@ucalgary.ca

Office location & office hours: SS830; M/W 13:00-14:00 or by appointment

Contact Phone: 403-220-5492

Instructor's web page: <http://ling.ucalgary.ca/profiles/susanne-carroll>

Undergraduate Student Advisor: Professor Robert W. Murray – lingadv@ucalgary.ca

Description

This course provides an advanced introduction to the study of grammatical gender. We will start with grammatical analyses of gender, move on to gender in first language acquisition and end with processing approaches to gender. If time permits and there is sufficient student interest, we will also examine gender acquisition in an L2.

One of the questions that interests me is: Should we conceptualize gender as a single morpho-syntactic primitive, viz. a phi-feature, as in recent generative linguistics, in which case every language that has gender has the same feature. Or, is gender just a way that linguists have of talking about sub-classes of nouns, with the gender system differing widely from language to language. This question is not a trivial one but rather lies at the heart of scientific activity where we constantly run the risk of “reifying” our notations, especially when we have ready assessment measures (compare the debates on whether what IQ tests measure is “intelligence” or not). This question is not an important one for all theories of language, but takes on significance for any approach, such as the generative one, that grounds linguistic description in “psychological reality”. One of the goals of the course is therefore to integrate theoretically motivated linguistic descriptions of gender with independent research on the acquisition and processing of gender. Note the directionality of dependencies: Psycholinguistics presupposes definitions of “language” that only linguistics can provide, but may provide data that are incompatible with certain theoretical stances.

Targeted students

This course will interest students who want to see how linguistics interacts with psychological issues of learning and processing. Students whose primary interests lie in phonology will be given the chance of writing a phonology-oriented paper since there are issues in language acquisition that relate to prosody and how it “interfaces” with morpho-syntax. Nonetheless, lectures, presentations and readings will focus largely on morpho-syntax..

Readings

A list of readings will be posted on Blackboard for class presentations and papers. These will be organized around particular languages. I have created lists that focus on Dutch, French, German and Spanish gender. Students who wish to pursue gender in a different language are free to do so but should consult with me first.

Assignments

3 class presentations:

- Presentation 1 should involve a decision to focus on gender in a specific language and provide a description of gender based on the linguistic readings. Presentation 1 will therefore include an initial bibliography (of a linguistic sort). You are advised, where possible, to do a detailed description and critique of a specific reading, linking it to theoretical stances presented in obligatory class readings and/or lectures (where relevant). The first presentations must take place early on in the seminar. = 10% of the total grade
- Presentation 2 should lay out a research question for the written essay, based on additional readings. For those of you interested in grammatical description, Presentation 2 should include additional material that

goes beyond the reading you present in Presentation 1. For those of you interested in either acquisition or processing, you should present a reading from one of these two disciplines. If you decide to focus on language processing in mature language users, you will need to make an additional decision to focus on processing of linguistic input (either priming or perceptual studies), or on speech production studies. In this case, too, you may again present a detailed description and critique of a specific reading, but this will involve focusing on assumptions relevant to language acquisition or to language processing. I also expect that you will link the contents of Presentation 1 and Presentation 2 by referencing facts about your chosen language. = 15% of the total grade.

- Presentation 3 will present the results of your research and *follow* on submission and feedback to the essay. These will take place in the last 2 weeks of the course. This should be an “integrative” or “summarizing” presentation, linking content from the first 2 presentations and the essay = 20% of the total grade.

N.B. You will get feedback on each of the first 2 presentations to help you prepare the essay and the final presentation.

Summary:

- **Presentation 1: Pick a language, read a paper (or parts of a book) describing the grammatical organization of gender in that language, and present that paper (or relevant parts of that book), referencing where possible obligatory readings dealing with theoretical issues.**
- **Presentation 2: Provide a more advanced grammatical description of your chosen language along with a research question (using a larger sets of readings). Or, focus on an acquisition question or a processing research question in connection with some acquisition study or some processing study.**
- **Presentation 3 (at the end of the course): Present the results of your research, summarizing the contents of your essay (+ feedback).**

1 essay (in 2 parts)

- This will address a linguistic or psycholinguistic question related to gender. The linguistic question will turn on issues of linguistic description, based on a survey of current work, and should include the information from the work(s) you choose to present in your Presentations 1 and 2. For those people who are more interested in acquisition or processing, I suggest that you create a research proposal that lays out a research question (based on a survey of current acquisition or processing work) and then defines an appropriate research methodology, including measurement instruments based on your chosen language. So, if you decide to do an acquisition study, you should be able to create relevant testing materials that are based on insights into the structure of gender in your chosen language.
- A preliminary version of the essay will be assessed largely for content. In this version, you will focus on laying out the research question, on discussing the literature that you have read, and in sketching out a solution (or in sketching out the measurement instruments you will use.) The commented returned essay will serve as the basis for your 3rd presentation. = 25% of the total.
- The final version of the essay must be a polished essay, properly formatted, and should respond to the questions and comments that I provide on the preliminary version. You should expect that there may well be content changes as well between versions 1 and 2. = 30% of the total.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS (INCLUDING POWERPOINTS OF PRESENTATIONS) ARE TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE DROP-BOX OF BLACKBOARD. IF YOU WANT FEEDBACK ON YOUR POWERPOINTS OR PRESENTATION HANDOUTS *BEFORE* YOU PRESENT YOU WILL NEED TO SUBMIT THEM TO THE DROP-BOX BY THE THURSDAY NOON PRECEDING YOUR PRESENTATION DATE.

Summary of assignments, value, and due dates

Activity	Value	Due date
(i) Presentation 1	10%	Sept. 24 th , (or Oct. 1 if necessary)
(ii) Presentation 2	15%	Oct. 22 nd (or Oct. 29 th if necessary)
(iii) Preliminary version of paper	25%	November 9 th , 5 p.m.
(iv) Presentation 3	20%	Nov. 26 th , or Dec. 3 rd
(iv) Final version of paper.	30%	Dec. 7 th , noon

Late assignments

All assignments are due when indicated. In the absence of a documented medical excuse, all late graded assignments will be docked one grade point for each day or part of a day the assignment is late. In other words, if your assignment is worth a “B” grade and you are 2 days late, you will get a “C+”. If your assignment is a week late, you will receive a failing grade. The moral of the story is: Plan your assignments from Day 1 and start talking to me about the work early on.

Distribution of Grades:

A+ = 95-100; A = 90-94; A- = 85-89; B+ = 80-84; B = 75-79; B- = 71-74; C+ = 67-70; C = 62-66; C- = 58-61; D+ = 54-57; D = 50-53; F < 50%

Digital devices

Laptops or pads are permitted in class. Cell phone activities and texting are not permitted during class. Photography is expressly forbidden.

GENERAL COURSE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

LINGUISTICS STUDENT ADVISING

For any questions regarding the undergraduate program in linguistics, the organization of your program, or the selection of courses, contact:

Undergraduate Advisor

Dr Robert W. Murray

403-220-8109

lingadv@ucalgary.ca

FACULTY of ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING and STUDENT INFORMATION

The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance that they require. The PIC is located in the Social Sciences Building, please contact them by phone 403-220-3580 for their current office location, or email artsads@ucalgary.ca, or visit the website <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (SSC). Degree advisors assist undergraduate students in planning their overall degree programs along with providing broad educational planning, learning support, assistance with academic difficulties, academic program guidance, writing support, success seminars and peer support. The SSC is on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library, or you can contact them on 403-220-5881, by email success@ucalgary.ca, or visit their website <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/>.

For registration issues, contact Enrolment Services who will also be able to help you with questions about fee payments, awards, financial aid, admissions questions, visiting and exchange students, open studies, transcripts, deferred exams. Enrolment Services are in the MacKimmie Library Block, Room 117, or you can contact them on 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit their website <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/>.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. **You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.**

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY ACT (FOIP)

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was enacted by the Alberta Legislature on June 1, 1994. The Act is intended first of all to allow any person the right of access to the records in the custody and under the control of a public body although this right is subject to limited and specific exceptions. The Act also includes a strong right to privacy component, allowing individuals to control the manner in which a public body collects personal information, to control the use that a public body may make of the information, and to control the disclosure of that information by a public body. It also allows individuals the right of access to personal information about themselves held by a public body and the right to request corrections to that information.

For more information on FOIP, please visit the website <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>, or contact Jo-Anne Munn Gafuik at 403-220-3602 or by email munnngafu@ucalgary.ca

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

1. the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
2. parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,;
3. the whole work (e.g. an essay) is copied from another source; and/or

4. a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Students are often encouraged to work together in preparing homework assignments, but check with your instructor beforehand. However, unless noted otherwise in writing, students must write up their own answers for submission of the assignment. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. Possible penalties for plagiarism include: failing the assignment, failing the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of plagiarism is also guilty of academic misconduct.

For more information on academic misconduct and related UofC regulations please consult the Student Misconduct web pages in the on-line University Calendar. These can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY POINTS

The University of Calgary is committed to creating a safe and healthy living and learning environment. The health and safety of our employees, students and the general public are the highest priority of the University of Calgary's Emergency Management Program. During times of emergency, Assembly Points have been identified across campus. These areas have been selected as they are large enough to hold a significant number of people and will provide an evacuated population access to washroom facilities and protection from the elements.

Assembly points are also designed to establish a location for information updates:

- from the emergency responders to the evacuees; and
- from the evacuated population to the emergency responders.

Please familiarize yourself with the following:

Emergency Assembly Points: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Emergency Instructions: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/28>

SAFEWALK INFORMATION

Twenty four hours a day and seven days a week, Safewalk volunteers walk people safely to their destination on campus. This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors. Requesting Safewalk volunteers to walk with you is easy:

- Call 403-220-5333 (24 hours a day/seven days a week, 365 days a year)
- Use the Help Phones (they are not just for emergencies)
- Approach an on-duty Safewalker and request a walk

For more information, contact the Safewalk main office at 403-220-4750, by email safewalk@ucalgary.ca or visit their website <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION

The Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) in partnership with the University of Calgary offers students a key advocacy resource to assist in addressing concerns and issues they encounter at the University with the Student Ombuds Office.

For students in undergraduate programs, please contact the Student's Union in the MacEwan Student Centre, Room MSC 251, on 403-220-6551, by email arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca, or visit their website <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>

The Student Ombuds Office is in the Administration Building, Room A166, or you can contact them on 403-220-6420, by email ombuds@ucalgary.ca or visit their website <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>