

LASC11091 Introduction to Language Research

Instructor: Hannah Rohde, DSB 2.06
Hannah.Rohde@ed.ac.uk
Office hours: Thursday 10-11 or by appointment

Wednesday required lecture & discussion: 14:10-16:00 [semester 1]

Location: Chrystal MacMillan Building, Seminar Room 5

Additional session: Thursday Linguistics Circle 16:10-17:30, DSB 3.10

Goals: This course aims to provide an introduction to research skills relevant to postgraduate work in Linguistics & English Language. Topics center around research practices, research tools, and dissertation preparation. The goal of the course is to equip students with both practical tools and guiding principles for issues like the identification of a research question, the use of relevant literature, the collection and analysis of data, and the format and style of linguistics writing.

Assignments: The course will be assessed pass/fail. Please submit each assignment on Learn. The assignments will be marked as complete/incomplete and, when the assignment involves writing dissertation sections, returned to you with comments. Passing the course simply requires completing the assignments. For the style of your write-up, it depends on the assignment. Assignments #1 and #3 will ask you to summarize something you have read; a simple list of bullet points is fine – full essay prose is not needed. Assignments #2 and #4 will ask you to re-write sections of a dissertation – full prose is needed but keep it brief.

Course structure:

Week1 (23 Sept): Research questions; Falsifiable hypotheses

Assignment #1 due 29 Sept: Read *The use of fillers in task-based speech: An experimental investigation of 'uh' and 'um'*. Identify the research questions and why they are interesting and relevant to the field of linguistics. Identify what a key result you find interesting. List any questions you have (about this dissertation, your programme, current courses, undertaking research, etc.). Bullet points are fine (definitely not more than 1 page). See sample on Learn.ed.ac.uk.

Week2 (30 Sept): Literature review; quantitative dissertations

Assignment #2 due 6 Oct: Rewrite intro to *The use of fillers in task-based speech* (1.5 pages, 1.5 spacing)

Week3 (7 Oct): Descriptive statistics; variables and samples

Week4 (14 Oct): Dependent/independent variables

Before class on 28 Oct: Try installing R, a software package for statistics:

<http://cran.r-project.org>

Week5 (21 Oct): no class

Week6 (28 Oct): Statistical tests; R basics; writing about analysis and results

Bring laptop (if you have one) to class today

Week7 (4 Nov): University library resources [Guest lecturer: Anne Donnelly]

Week8 (11 Nov): Corpora and tools

Week9 (18 Nov): Abstract writing, research proposals, ethics

Assignment #3 due 24 November: Read *Laughter's linguistic politics*. Identify the research topic, why it is interesting, and what the key findings are. List any questions you have. Bullet points are fine (not more than 1 page).

Week10 (25 Nov): Qualitative dissertations + Discussion with current students

[Guests: Mirjam Eiswirth, Daniel Lam, Rowan MacKay]

Assignment #4 due 8 Dec: Rewrite specified section of dissertation on language attitudes

Also, see additional sheet for optional training sessions

Optional Research Training Sessions (for MSc & Honours students)

Estimated Schedule Below (subject to change)

session	time	place	topic	people
1	Fri 25 Sep, 1.10-2	==	Introduction: Planning a research project	Bettelou Los/Ellen Gurman Bard
2	Fri 2 Oct, 1.10-2	AT theatre 3	Statistics	Tom Booth
3	Wed 7 Oct, 5.10-6	AT theatre 3	Thinking about Methods	Alice Turk
4	Fri 16 Oct, 1.10-2	AT theatre 3	Field Work and Ethics	Lauren Hall-Lew
5	Week 5 Wed 21 Oct, 5.10-6	AT theatre 3	Writing Up: Style, Referencing, Avoiding plagiarism, etc.; Organization remainder of term	Bettelou Los
6	Week 6 Fri 30 Oct, 1.10-2	AT theatre 3	Online Resources	Pavel Iosad
7	Week 7 Fri 6 Nov, 1.10-2	AT theatre 3	Library Resources and Referencing Resources	Anne Donnelly