

# Linguistics



## What Is Linguistics?

Linguistics, often dubbed “the science of language,” offers fresh perspectives on something we normally take for granted. The field examines language from all angles. Some linguists specialize in sound systems, others in grammar, and others explore how languages change over time, the effect of linguistic choices on social relations, or how children learn language, just to name a few of the many dimensions of linguistic study. While linguists typically know several languages, learning how to speak, read, and write languages is not a primary goal. Linguists study languages in order to gain insight into the broader human phenomenon of language.

## Careers & Jobs

By studying linguistics you will develop skills that apply to a number of careers. The field

combines elements of the humanities and the social sciences and promotes a useful intellectual flexibility. You will gain proficiencies with both qualitative and quantitative data and hone skills in critical thinking and analytical reasoning. You will know how to weave together multiple strands of evidence in order to construct arguments and to communicate effectively with diverse audiences.

## Common Career Paths for MU Linguistics Graduates

- Computer technology related to speech recognition, artificial intelligence
- Language teaching in the U.S. or abroad
- Translation and interpretation for government agencies and global companies
- Publishing and writing
- Communications consulting for organizations and companies

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## Linguistics at Mizzou

MU is one of just two public universities in the state offering a major in linguistics. Our faculty come from many academic units including communication science and disorders, English, philosophy, and the language departments. You experience a range of approaches to the study of language. [Linguistics classes](#) are usually small, allowing you to get to know your fellow students and your professors. The linguistics major consists of 21 credit hours and is designed to be flexible in order to facilitate double majoring with another field. We also strongly encourage students to study abroad to enhance their appreciation of other linguistic cultures.

## Making a Difference

Linguistics students learn by doing. Language is complicated and governed by rules that speakers follow unconsciously. Uncovering and specifying those rules is central to what linguists do. In and out of the classroom, linguistics majors work to describe the complexities of spoken and written language. In the capstone class, students spend a semester working with a native speaker of a lesser-known language as they attempt to understand and document core elements of the sound system and grammar of that language. In a recent case, the class focused on the Kenyan language Bukusu, and the students discovered key facts about the language that were previously unknown since grammar books and dictionaries of Bukusu do not yet exist.

## Undergraduate Research

Faculty are committed to mentoring students in the research process. Whether you are interested in how a group of languages

evolved from a common ancestor over thousands of years, in how Missouri dialects are changing today, or

in other linguistic issues, you have opportunities to satisfy your curiosity about language by working alongside experts. Some students join research teams conducting laboratory experiments to study language processing or speech perception and others engage in fieldwork in communities close to home or around the globe. Linguistics majors regularly share their discoveries through posters and presentations at MU events and professional conferences. If you want to contribute to cutting-edge research, linguistics has much to offer you.

## Scholarships

Scholarship support is available from the [College of Arts and Science](#) (search under Dean's Office).



Noun class	Sg	Pl	Gloss
Cl. 1-2	mo-to	ba-to	'person', 'people'
Cl. 3-4	mo-rjanga	mi-rjanga	'doctor', 'doctors'
Cl. 5-6	li-toi	na-ba	'ear', 'ears'
Cl. 7-8	li-beta	na-ba	'duck', 'ducks'
Cl. 9-10	si-n	na-mbiliki	'rabbit', 'rabbits'
Cl. 11-12	ba-mbwa	ba-mbwa	'dog', 'dogs'
Cl. 13-14	ma-kolo	ma-kolo	'leg/foot', 'legs/feet'
Cl. 15-16	bi-lenge	bi-lenge	'youth', 'youths'
Cl. 17-18	-lamu	-	'good deed'
Cl. 19-20	-beta	-	'to hit'

## For More Info

 [linguistics.missouri.edu](http://linguistics.missouri.edu)

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Complete undergraduate course listing:  
[catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/linguistics/#courseinventory](http://catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/linguistics/#courseinventory)

MU Admissions: [admissions.missouri.edu](http://admissions.missouri.edu)

 [MizzouLinguistics](https://www.facebook.com/MizzouLinguistics)  [MizzouLing](https://twitter.com/MizzouLing)