ComD 677, Computer-Assisted Language Assessment, Spring 2008

Professor: Ron Channell PhD
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Office Hours: drop by or make appointment.

Overview
This graduate course takes a deep look at Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) in the clinical measurement of language. We'll cover widely used methods of language testing and language sample analysis. You'll be able to describe the scope, theoretical orientation, merits, and limitations of each method. I expect that you know and remember English grammar (as covered in ComD 230) and basic statistics (Stat 221), have studied language development in general (as in ComD 330), and have studied the basics regarding the assessment and treatment of child language disorders (as in ComD 350).

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, you'll be able to describe the theoretical basis, nature, strengths, and limitations of both standardized and non-standardized methods of language assessment [KASA standard III-D • receptive & expressive language: assessment]

Readings
The text for the class will be primarily the ASHA journals (JSHD, JSHR, AJSLP, LSHSS, & JSLHR) from 1980-present. Readings are available from the library, mostly on-line.

Thursday, May 1

Tuesday, May 6

Thursday, May 8

Tuesday, May 13
Thursday, May 15

**Midterm**, Tuesday, May 20

Thursday, May 22
a. Do the on-line SALT tutorials at [http://www.saltsoftware.com/](http://www.saltsoftware.com/). The goal is to be able to transcribe samples in SALT format. If you have Windows, you can also download a free demo version. If you have Mac, choose the option to print the tutorials, which will let you read them in pdf format.

Tuesday, May 27 [LARSP reference materials]

Thursday, May 29

Tuesday, June 3

**No class** on Thursday, June 5 (SRCLD conference)

Tuesday, June 10

Thursday, June 12


**Final Exam, Wednesday, June 18**

**Graded Class Activities**

1. Midterm and Final: these exams will be "closed book" and will be a mixture of short answer and essay questions. The final will be cumulative.
2. Language sample analysis and summary report. Students will put a sample in SALT format, do a LARSP analysis of the sample, and write a one-two page summary report. See *Project Specifications* below.

**Class Participation**

Complete the assigned readings before each class and be ready to discuss them.

I expect attendance and class participation. If you can't attend or prepare for this class you should not be enrolled for it. Hire a babysitter for your children; don't bring them to class (though quiet babies are welcome). Borrowing notes is a nuisance to other students and is no substitute for your own encoding and discussion of class material. Eating and drinking in class is okay except for noisy or odiferous things such as Corn Nuts or Fritos. Missing class, sleeping in class, browsing the web, emailing, texting, having your cell phone ring, or privately conversing in class with friends will lower your class participation rating.

**Semester Grading**

Semester grades will be based on the midterm (30%), the final exam (40%), the language sample analysis & summary report (20%), and 10% on class participation (which includes class attendance, class preparation, and involvement in class discussion). The grading scale used is 95-100% of the possible points for an A, 90-94% A-, 87-89% B+, 83-86% B, 80-82% B-, 77-79% C+, 73-76% C, and below 73%, an E. Extra credit is not possible.

**Preventing Sexual Harassment**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity receiving federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

**Students With Disabilities**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability, which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895. D-382 ASB.
**Project Specifications**

Projects are due on or before Thursday, June 12, 2008.

Submitted electronically (so I can run the file through the SALT software):

The SALT-formatted version of the file

Submitted electronically or on paper:

1. **Summary report (1 to 2 pages)**
   a. Background information: child name, age, diagnostic category, clinician name, etc.
   b. Results of SALT analyses: MLU, MLU2, etc.
   c. A summary of the child's syntactic abilities based on the LARSP analysis: Question, command, and statement clausal structure, phrasal structure, word-level abilities, embedding and conjoining, and advanced (Stage VI & VII) skills. The narrative should describe the child's syntax clearly and be professional in content and form.

2. **LARSP summary form**

   List up to 5 utterances (by number) which contain that construction. You can mark "trickle down" productivity with an asterisk if a more advanced form of that item was productive. You can write on the form as copied from the book, or a version of this form is available as a Word doc file; email me and I'll send you a copy.

3. **The sample, with each utterance correctly analyzed**

   This can be a rough draft copy, with pencil and notes, etc. Just make sure I can check the correctness of your LARSP analysis of each utterance.