Looking for a graduate degree in an active and interesting field?

Do questions like these intrigue you?

• How does a child learn a language?
• How does a person learn more than one language? Is it a bad thing or a good thing?
• Why do languages diverge into dialects?
• How do you study the regional and social dialects of a language?
• How do languages change over time?
• How can you reconstruct earlier forms of human languages, and what do these reconstructions reveal about the history and cultures of those peoples?
• How would you write the dictionary and grammar to describe a newly-discovered language?
• What are languages in the animal world like, and how do they compare to human language?
• Can animals learn a human language?
• What are the subconscious systems which facilitate pronunciation, and word and sentence formation? How do children learn them?
• Are there universal characteristics which all human languages share?
• How does brain injury affect speech?
• How do you make a computer speak a human language?

If they do, then consider the MA in Linguistics at UTEP!

(Study in Linguistics commonly begins at the graduate level. Read More...)
What is Linguistics? Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. It is a major part of what is termed ‘Cognitive Science’. A central concern of Linguistics is to offer answers to the questions of (i) how children (and adults) learn languages, and (ii) exactly what is learned when a person learns to speak and understand a language.

Learning a language is one of the most complex tasks that any human being undertakes in her/his lifetime. And yet every normal human being does it at a very early age and with relative ease. This points toward the idea that key aspects of language are hard-wired in the human brain. One of the central tasks of linguistic research is to discover what the hard-wired elements are, and how the hard-wired system ‘tunes’ itself to the surrounding language so that by around the age of 5 years, a child speaks the language at a near-adult-like level.

This is only one of many interesting questions that Linguists investigate. There are many others.

Why have I never heard of it? In the U.S., Linguistics is not taught in high school (in contrast to Britain, where ‘Linguistics’ or ‘English Language’ is an A levels subject). Also, most American Universities do not offer the BA or BS in Linguistics.

Can I start at the graduate level? Yes, that is commonly where students in the U.S. begin the study of Linguistics. The Linguistics MA program here at UTEP offer courses which introduce you to the field and then take you to the frontiers of research in a number of areas.

What do Linguists do? There is a great variety of work which involves linguists or which applies the results of linguistic research, including research in child and adult language acquisition (classical ‘Psycholinguistics’); research in bilingualism; teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL/Applied Linguistics); teaching languages other than English; preservation of endangered languages; speech-language pathology; computation involving human language (Natural Language Processing); machine translation; language and the law (Forensic Linguistics); dialect research (Language Variation); research into sentence construction (Syntax) in any language; research on pronunciation systems (Phonetics/Phonology) of any language; research on systems of meaning (Semantics); research on word structure (Morphology) in any language; research on how languages change through time (Historical Linguistics); translation; interpretation; the study of literary style (Stylistics).

What degrees are available? The MA Program in Linguistics offers the MA in Linguistics, which allows the student to work in a wide variety of possible areas of research, depending on the student’s interests. Also available are the MA in Linguistics with a specialization in Applied Linguistics, and the MA in Linguistics with a specialization in Hispanic Linguistics. In addition, the Graduate School offers a TESOL Certificate for completing a sequence of courses which are a part of the MA program curriculum.
Who are the faculty and what are their research interests?

JON AMASTAE, Prof. (Ph.D., University of Oregon) Phonology, language variation, Spanish dialectology
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CHARLES ELERICK, Prof. (Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin) Historical linguistics, linguistics for teacher preparation
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NATALIA MAZZARO, Ass’t. Prof. (Ph.D., University of Toronto) Hispanic linguistics, language variation, phonetics, phonology, sociolinguistics
LART 217, 747-7040, nmazzaro@utep.edu

NICHOLAS SOBIN, Prof. (Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin) Syntactic theory, computational syntax, syntactic variation
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ALFREDO URZÚA B., Ass’t. Prof. (Ph.D., Northern Arizona University) Second language pedagogy, ESOL, discourse analysis
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Is there financial support? The Department of Languages & Linguistics offers a number of TA-ships. These may involve teaching English as a second language, assisting faculty in teaching Linguistics classes, or teaching Spanish.

Who do I contact?

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http://www.academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=51727&submenuheader=0

For access to the course books which describe the undergraduate and graduate programs in Linguistics, go to