Final Report

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Linguistics in the Undergraduate Curriculum

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Contents

⟹ Final Report

Exhibits

Appendices

Linguistics in the Undergraduate Curriculum

Introduction

Until recently, linguistics was a discipline taught primarily at the graduate level. However, despite the recent growth of linguistics at the undergraduate level, linguists have felt that the discipline is still not well represented in undergraduate curricula, and many of them have been asking the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) for advice and counsel on how to establish new programs or to strengthen already existing ones. In response to this need, the LSA applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities for support of a project to study linguistics in the undergraduate curriculum, a project which has come to be known as the LUC Project. Throughout the life of the project, a high level of broadly based interest and commitment on the part of members of the discipline was manifested in the percentage of responses to the project staff's requests for information and the willingness of all who took part to volunteer their time and expertise.

The LUC Project examined the place of linguistics in undergraduate curricula in the United States and Canada, the nature and structure of the curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree in linguistics, and the population served by the curricula. On the basis of this examination, a package of materials was prepared that may be used by linguists and university administrators to enhance existing linguistics curricula and to develop new linguistics offerings. These materials do not provide explicit models for curriculum and program development, but rather contain information and suggestions that may be used in a variety of academic environments, from small liberal arts colleges to major universities.

A brief description of the materials follows; further details about them are provided in subsequent sections.

1. <u>Directory of Undergraduate Linguistics Programs</u> compiled by Frank Heny. A compilation of catalog descriptions of 127 linguistics programs and departments in the United States and Canada, including descriptions of undergraduate course offerings.

2. <u>The Status of Undergraduate Education in Linguistics in the United States and Canada</u> by D. Terence Langendoen. An overview of trends in undergraduate linguistics education in the United States and Canada over the past 15 years, including where linguistics is taught, where undergraduate degrees in linguisics are granted, what institutional arrangements exist for offering linguistics courses, enrollments of linguistics majors and minors, enrollments in linguistics courses, and number of degrees granted.

3. <u>Using Existing Resources to Develop an Undergraduate Linguistics Major</u> by Manjari Ohala and Arnold M. Zwicky. Information and sugges-

tions on how courses offered in various departments can be used to develop a major, how degree requirements can be formulated, and what institutional arrangements for offering a linguistics major are possible.

4. Advocacy Statements. Fifteen individually prepared statements by linguists on the role that linguistics can play in undergraduate education.

5. Sample Undergraduate Linguistics Courses. Detailed descriptions of courses offered at a variety of institutions in the United States and Canada that may be adapted at other institutions to round out a program of study for linguistics majors or to present linguistics to nonmajors.

6. Library List: A Suggested Library Collection for Undergraduate Linguistics Programs. A list intended primarily for institutions interested in establishing an undergraduate linguistics program.

Major Activities

A. Data Collection and Analysis

To develop a comprehensive picture of the current state of linguistics at the undergraduate level, data were collected from three sources: (1) An update of Frank Heny's earlier survey (Undergraduate Linguistics in the United States in 1985); (2) responses to a specially designed questionnaire, hereafter referred to as the LUC Questionnaire; and (3) the DIRECTORY OF PROGRAMS IN LINGUISTICS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, published by the LSA, of which six issues have appeared (dated 1974, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1984, and 1987).

1. Heny's 1985 survey includes an introductory article giving a rationale for including linguistics as a subject in the undergraduate curriculum. The bulk of the survey, however, consisted of the catalog descriptions of the undergraduate linguistics programs and their courses on 56 campuses in the United States. It was decided to update the survey as part of the LUC Project; accordingly, a letter (Exhibit A) was sent to the 56 institutions included in the 1985 survey and to 104 other institutions in the United States and Canada that offer undergraduate linguistics courses. Recipients were asked to send copies of their linguistics programs descriptions and course offerings as they appear in the most recently published catalogue. Such information from 127 institutions is included in the final product. Heny supervised the preparation of the document on a microcomputer, and the files were uploaded onto a mainframe at SUNY-Albany for final editing and printing. The resulting Directory of Undergraduate Linguistics Programs (Appendix 1) is the most complete listing of its kind ever compiled. The text is also available on microcomputer disks and will be distributed by the LSA Secretariat at cost.

2. The LUC Questionnaire (Exhibit B) was drafted by Consultant Panel members Daniel Brink and Victor Raskin and was used to collect information about the current status of linguistics at particular institutions, current enrollments in linguistics courses, numbers of linguistics majors and

minors, and the place of linguistics in the curriculum as a whole (e.g., which linguistics courses can be used to fulfill distribution requirements or are part of the core curriculum), which other departments require linguistics courses for their majors, what courses in other departments are required for all linguistics majors, and which linguistics courses are mandated by law for particular purposes, such as teacher training and certification. The questionnaire was purposely kept brief to encourage recipients to complete and return it. It was sent to 225 institutions in the United States and Canada; 116 responses were received.

It was originally intended that the material gathered by this questionnaire would be expanded to obtain a clearer understanding of how linguistics departments and programs relate to other departments and programs within their institutions. Steering Committee and Consultant Panel members were to interview chairs of linguistics departments and programs, other department and program chairs, and university administrators and policymakers. Unfortunately, the inability of the LSA to raise matching funds meant that this part of the project could not be carried out.

3. The final source of information for the LUC Project was the DIRECTORY OF PROGRAMS IN LINGUISTICS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA published by the LSA. The various editions of this directory were consulted to gather information about such matters as numbers of undergraduate degrees granted in various years and types of administrative structures for individual departments and programs.

The data from the LUC Questionnaire and the LSA DIRECTORY OF PROGRAMS were entered into a relational database. An analysis of this data, except for the answers to questions 4-7 of the LUC Questionnaire, appears in a report entitled The Status of Undergraduate Education in Linguistics in the United States and Canada (Appendix 2). The introductory narrative of this report is followed by 40 tables, 20 each for the United States and Canada, summarizing the status of linguistics in undergraduate education in those two countries both at present and over the past 15 years. It is intended that the unanalyzed material from the LUC Questionnaire will be analyzed at a later date, and the results disseminated.

B. Commissioned Papers

Two categories of commissioned papers were originally proposed. The first was described as "Curriculum guides designed for different institutional settings. The guides (would) reflect the limitations on scholarly and financial resources in many institutions." The Steering Committee agreed that any papers in this category should be undertaken by committee members themselves. In working through the outlines for these items, the group concluded that regardless of available resources, all institutions would need to consider the same basic issues. Therefore, it was decided that a guide would be developed as a single document authored by Steering Committee members Manjari Ohala and Arnold Zwicky. Their article, Using Existing Resources to Develop an Undergraduate Linguistics Major, appears as Appendix 3.

Papers in the second category address the teaching of linguistics; they advocate linguistics as part of the undergraduate curriculum (hence the name

"Advocacy Statements"), explain the role of linguistics in a liberal education, and provide people already teaching undergraduate linguistics courses new perspectives on the field. The Steering Committee developed a master list of possible topics for these papers. Letters (Exhibit C) were sent to 24 individuals, inviting them to prepare an 8-10 page advocacy statement on a particular topic. Seventeen individuals agreed to write such a paper; 13 papers were received. All 13 papers were accepted for inclusion, some after extensive revision. All authors were asked to follow specific format guidelines in the preparation of final copy. In addition, the Steering Committee recommended the inclusion of two articles from the journal, Innovations in Linguistics Education, published by the Indiana University Linguistics Club under the editorship of Daniel Dinnsen. These 15 advocacy papers appear in Appendix 4.

The original budget allowed for the preparation of up to 23 commissioned papers. The final number was 16 (15 advocacy statements plus the Ohala/Zwicky paper).

C. Curricula

The original proposal and budget allowed for the development of model curricula. Discussion at the department chairs and program heads session held at the Society's 1986 Annual Meeting made it clear that the term "model" presented problems for our constituency. "Model" would imply that there is a right way to do this when, in fact, different things work for different situations. Members felt that material designed to provide examples of and suggestions for starting or enhancing linguistics education would be more appropriate and, in the end, more useful. As a result, nothing called or intended to serve as model curricula was developed.

Instead, descriptions of "innovative" linguistics courses were collected into one volume. The Sample Undergraduate Linguistics Courses package (Appendix 5) was assembled to encourage institutions with an undergraduate linguistics program or department to consider enhancing their offerings as well as to suggest alternatives for new programs. A letter (Exhibit D) requesting descriptions of "innovative" courses was sent to all department chairs and program heads. The materials received were reviewed independently by two Steering Committee members and a member of the Consultant Panel. Any course selected by any reviewer was included. In all, 55 course descriptions were received from 22 institutions, and 29 were selected. A standardized format was developed for presenting the course information; as a consequence, all these descriptions were retyped by the Secretariat.

Three pieces from the Innovations in Linguistics Education journal, three papers orginally submitted as advocacy statements, and a piece from Linguistics and the University Education were added to the collection. Because of their length, they were not reformatted.

D. Additional Material

At the suggestion of colleagues, the Steering Committee decided to supplement the materials envisioned in the original proposal with a list of relevant library materials considered to be basic references for undergrad-

uate linguistics students. The Steering Committee looked at the library list assembled for the University of California system in 1967 (and updated in 1975) when it expanded the number of schools in its system, at a list developed by Frank Heny for Carleton College in 1985 when it began to entertain the notion of adding linguistics to its curriculum, and at a current list of relevant library holdings of Middlebury College, obtained with the help of faculty member Jeannine Heny. The Middlebury list was judged to be the most complete, and permission was obtained to reprint a limited number of copies. The list (Appendix 6) will be helpful to schools in the beginning phases of undergraduate linguistics education.

Staffing

The proposed staff consisted of a Principal Investigator, Senior Project Advisor, Steering Committee, Writing Group, Consultant Panel, and Project Coordinator. Except for the Project Coordinator, all were individuals with experience and expertise in undergraduate linguistics education. The Project Coordinator was an employee of the LSA Secretariat where project activities were coordinated.

Staffing patterns reflected what was proposed with four adjustments. (1) In accord with LSA policy, D. Terence Langendoen, Secretary-Treasurer of the Society, served as Principal Investigator. It was intended, however, that the prime mover of the activity would be the Senior Project Advisor, Arnold M. Zwicky. In late 1986, at his request, Dr. Zwicky was relieved of his Senior Project Advisor duties but remained an active member of the Steering Committee. His other duties were assumed by the Principal Investigator. (2) Judith Aissen, originally recruited to be a member of the Writing Group, agreed to become a member of the Steering Committee. (3) The Writing Group met in the summer of 1986 and learned through experience that the "group" approach was not a cost-effective way to produce papers; it was disbanded. (4) To reduce costs, the parttime support staff person originally included in the budget for both years of the project was not actually brought into the project until the second year.

Funding Efforts

The Society proposed to seek 50% of the estimated cost of the LUC Project from private foundations with matching funds from the NEH. Funding possibilities were unsuccessfully explored with the Mellon, EXXON, Ford, and Dana Foundations. In April 1986, the revised budget reflecting no support outside the NEH was filed.

As a result of our inability to obtain matching funds, the Senior Project Advisor, Consultant Panel members, and those who contributed advocacy statements served without receiving honoraria; plans for the interviews to collect additional data were dropped; the number of Steering Committee meetings was cut from three to two; and the two Consultant Panel working sessions were cancelled.

Dissemination of Results

Members of the Society have been kept informed of the progress of the LUC Project through notices in the LSA BULLETIN, sessions at the 1986 and 1987 Annual Meetings, and the Society's monthly mailing to linguistics department chairs and program heads. In addition, LUC Project materials were on display at the Book Exhibit at the 1987 LSA Annual Meeting. A summary of the project and an invitation to write for further information will appear in a future issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education.

Over the past two years, the Secretariat has kept a file of requests for information about undergraduate linguistics. The queries were answered at the time they were received; moreover, the correspondents were also contacted when the project was completed and were given the opportunity to request copies of LUC materials.

Materials from the project have already been used by the Georgetown University Department of Linguistics, which conducted an assessment in preparation for long range planning. In addition, the Office of the President of the University of California used LUC materials in the recent university-wide planning review of linguistics. We have been notified by both institutions that the LUC materials were a useful source of needed information.

To make the project more widely known and to ensure that materials will remain available for a period of time, copies of the LUC Project materials will also be supplied to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), a computerized education database accessed world-wide.

Please complete and return this questionnaire by 1 May 1987 to: LUC Project,
Linguistic Society of America, 1325 18th St NW, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20036.
Please use the back or attach additional sheets of paper if necessary.

Question 1: To be answered by all institutions.

1. What is the status of linguistics at your institution? Please check and fill
in the appropriate blanks.

   a. _____ Department of linguistics (and _____)

      _____ Program in linguistics (and _____)

      _____ Offerings in linguistics in other departments. Please list the
      departments below:

   b. _____ Undergraduate major   _____ Undergraduate major with _____

      _____ Undergraduate minor   _____ M.A./M.S.   _____ Ph.D.

Questions 2-6: To be answered only by institutions offering an undergraduate
major or minor in linguistics.

2. a. Current number of undergraduate majors in linguistics _____

   b. Current number of undergraduate minors in linguistics _____

   c. Average number of students in linguistics each semester
   or quarter _____

   (If exact figures are not available, please estimate.)

3. If your institution has a Department or Program in linguistics, what admin-
istrative structure does it fit into (e.g., School of Humanities, School of
Social Sciences, Liberal Arts and Sciences)?

4. a. If your institution has general education requirements for the undergrad-
uate degree, which, if any, of these requirements are satisfied by offerings
in linguistics?
   Requirement   Linguistics Course

   b. If your institution has a core curriculum, what place, if any, does lin-
guistics have in it?

5. a. Please list linguistics courses required by other programs at your
institution.
   Course Title   Required By

   b. Please list courses in other programs that linguistics requires.

6. Please list any linguistics courses mandated by LAW in your state (e.g., for
teacher training).
   Course   Required for (e.g., ESL teacher certification)

7. Additional comments.