

# LING 28310/38310: Structure of Hungarian

This syllabus is up-to-date as of: December 2018.

Quarter:	Autumn 2018
Instructor:	Adam Roth Singerman
Instructor e-mail:	adamsingerman@uchicago.edu
Teaching Assistant:	Eszter Ronai
TA e-mail:	ronai@uchicago.edu
Class time & location:	Social Sciences 108, MW 1:30-2:50
Office hours:	Friday mornings / by appointment

## 1 Course description

LING 28310/38310 is not a language class in the traditional sense. You will not be evaluated on your pronunciation of Hungarian words; there will not be vocabulary quizzes or conversation exercises. Rather, the course objective is to show students the ways that Hungarian has come to shape the development of contemporary linguistic theory via an in-depth examination of the language's major grammatical properties. We will begin the quarter by discussing vowel harmony and other salient properties of the language's phonology, and will then move on to morphological questions (such as object agreement in verbal inflection) and syntactic ones (including the interaction between word order and topic/focus). The final week of the quarter will be reserved for student presentations.

## 2 Readings

We'll be using a combination of book chapters and research articles over the course of the quarter. You do not need to buy any books for this course; everything will be available on Canvas, the library website, or JSTOR. The following two books have been put on reserve at the Regenstein and can be consulted there:

1. Rounds, Carol. 2009. *Hungarian: An Essential Grammar*. New York: Routledge.

2. Törkenczy, Miklós. 2008. *Hungarian verbs & essentials of grammar*. New York : McGraw-Hill.

### 3 Grading

Attendance and participation in discussion:	25%
Weekly questions, posted to Canvas:	25%
Problem sets:	25%
Final presentation:	25%

Please come to all class meetings and please be prepared to participate in discussion. Because the assigned readings can get dense – and because you’ll pay more attention to them this way! – please post two response questions to Canvas each week. The two questions should be posted by Tuesday at 6PM; you are welcome to post them earlier if you like. Each question should respond to a different reading. In the event that more than two readings are assigned for a given week, you don’t need to post any extra responses.

Section will be held intermittently on Fridays, but not every week. Undergraduates/non-linguists are required to attend section whenever it is held. Graduate students are welcome to attend as well.

You’ll be asked to complete two problem sets, focused mostly on morphophonology and morphology. You are encouraged to work with your peers on these problem sets, subject to two conditions: (a) you must write up your own analysis; (b) you must state the names of the colleagues you worked with.

For the final presentation, you’ll be asked to present to the class on a topic in Hungarian (socio)linguistics that we haven’t covered in earlier weeks. Your presentation should build upon two or three independent articles / book chapters that you have read, and it should include a hand-out or PowerPoint presentation. I am happy to discuss topics with you and to point you toward interesting, accessible materials.

### 4 Concerning the response questions that you post to Canvas

These questions should get you to think critically about the readings, particularly their more challenging or noteworthy parts. Ideally, you will show us through these questions that you’ve done the reading in a thoughtful fashion. Each response question should be about a paragraph in length; you can write more if you feel like you have more to say. Please remember that you are required to post two questions per week, each responding to a different reading. Please post them by 6PM on Tuesdays so that Eszter and I can review them in time before the Wednesday class session.

## 5 Academic honesty

My policy is to trust that you will do honest work. It is difficult to regain that trust in the case of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. In addition, the Office of the Dean of Students asks instructors to submit information whenever there is a case of academic dishonesty. Let's avoid problems later on by agreeing now, at the start of the quarter, to follow our institution's standards for honest and original academic work.

## 6 Accommodations

Students who need any kind of accommodation for disability must present a letter from Student Disability Services (<https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/>) at the beginning of the quarter. The policy of Student Disability Services is that accommodations cannot be provided retroactively; that is, instructors cannot accommodate individual students' needs on a given assignment or test *after* that assignment or test is to be completed. So please talk to me earlier rather than later.

## 7 Week-by-week plan

This course will be divided into four units. Following the introductory lecture on Monday, October 1st, we will have a unit on (morpho)phonology; a unit on nominal and verbal morphology; and a unit on syntax/information structure. The fourth and final unit will consist of student presentations on additional topics of interest.

Date	Topics	Readings
Monday October 1st	Introduction to the Hungarian language: geographic extension, official status, speaker base, genealogical relationships. We will review the official orthography to lay the groundwork for the unit on (morpho)phonology.	
Wednesday October 3rd	<b>Beginning of (morpho)phonology unit.</b> Phonemic inventory, syllable structure, voicing assimilation, and vowel harmony.	Siptár and Torkenczy 2000: chapter 2 ('Preliminaries') and chapter 5 ('Phonotactics')
Monday October 8th	No class because of NELS.	
Wednesday October 10th	More on vowel harmony: lexical exceptions, pockets of (ir)regularity, stochastic knowledge.	Kenesei et al 1998: chapter 3 ('Phonology') Hayes et al 2009 Hayes and Cziráky Londe 2006
Monday October 15th	<b>First problem set due.</b> Final discussion of vowel harmony and its exceptions; discussion of lowering stems and lowering affixes.	same readings from previous Wednesday

Continued from previous page

Date	Topics	Readings
Wednesday October 17th	<b>Conclusion of (morpho)phonology unit.</b> We return the first problem set and address any remaining questions.	
Monday October 22nd	<b>Beginning of nominal and verbal morphology unit.</b> Introduction to the system of nominal cases; pronominal paradigms; possessive morphology.	Bartos 1997 Coppock and Wechsler 2012
Wednesday October 24th	Verbal conjugations: tenses and moods; ‘definite’ and ‘indefinite’ forms (sometimes also called ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’). Overarching question: what are the syntactic or semantic factors that condition the use of definite/objective morphology?	Bartos 1997 Coppock and Wechsler 2012
Monday October 29th	We continue our discussion of the distinction between definite/objective and indefinite/subjective conjugations, with a special focus on CP complements and semantic objects that are not marked as accusative.	É Kiss 2013
Wednesday October 31st	<b>Conclusion of morphology unit; second problem set due.</b> We return the second problem set and address remaining questions about nominal and verbal morphology.	
Monday November 5th	<b>Beginning of unit on syntax and information structure.</b> How is the Hungarian sentence organized? A look at topics and comments.	É Kiss 2002: chapter 2 (‘Topic-predicate articulation of the sentence’) and chapter 3 (‘The minimal predicate’) Varga 2016
Wednesday November 7th	The position of focused constituents in the Hungarian clause. Do <i>wh</i> -words and other foci occupy the same syntactic position as adverb-like preverbs ( <i>be</i> ‘into’, <i>fel</i> ‘up’, etc)?	É Kiss 1998 Gécseg and Kiefer 2009
Monday November 12th	Is exhaustivity in focus constructions about syntax/semantics, or is it about prosody/pragmatics?	Szendrői 2003 plus work by Daniel Wedgwood, with response by É Kiss 2010
Wednesday November 14th	More on the nature of focus in the Hungarian clause; new experimental evidence.	Gerőcs et al 2014 Pintér 2018

Continued from previous page

Date	Topics	Readings
Monday November 19th	Coordination and agreement.	Bánréti 2003 É Kiss 2012
Wednesday November 21st	<b>Third problem set due.</b> Continued discussion of coordination and agreement in Hungarian.	same readings from Monday
Monday November 26th	<b>Conclusion of syntax/information structure unit.</b> We return the third problem set and discuss remaining questions about the syntactic organization of the Hungarian clause and its relationship to information structure.	
November 28th	No class because of the instructor's trip to the University of Toronto.	
Monday December 3rd and Wednesday December 5th	<b>Student presentations!</b> Possible topics for student presentations include: the sociolinguistics of Hungarian spoken outside of the nation state of Hungary; quantification and its morphosyntactic properties; historical change from Old Hungarian to the modern language...  <b>Students are asked to discuss the topic of their presentation with me by mid-November at the latest. I can provide you with PDFs on many interesting topics.</b>	

## Full list of readings

1. Abondolo, Daniel Mario. 1988. *Hungarian inflectional morphology*. Budapest: Akadémia Kiadó.
2. Bánréti, Zoltán. 2003. On the syntax of coordinate constructions. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 50(3-4):265–340.  
[link](#)
3. Bartos, Huba. 1997. On 'subjective' and 'objective' agreement in Hungarian. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 44(3-4):363–384.  
[link](#)
4. Coppock, Elizabeth, and Stephen Wechsler. 2012. The objective conjugation in Hungarian: agreement without phi-features. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 30(3):699–740.  
[link](#)
5. É Kiss, Katalin. 2002. *The Syntax of Hungarian*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
[link](#)

6. É Kiss, Katalin. 2010. Structural focus and exhaustivity. In *Information Structure: Theoretical, Typological and Experimental Perspectives*, edited by Malte Zimmermann and Caroline Féry. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
[link](#)
7. É Kiss, Katalin. 2012. Patterns of agreement with coordinate noun phrases in Hungarian. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 30(4):1027–1060.  
[link](#)
8. É Kiss, Katalin. 2013. The Inverse Agreement Constraint in Uralic Languages. *Finno-Ugric Languages and Linguistics* 2(1):2–21.  
[link](#)
9. Gécseg, Zsuzsanna, and Ferenc Kiefer. 2009. A new look at information structure in Hungarian. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 27(3):583–622.  
[link](#)
10. Gerócs, Mátyás, et al. 2014. Exhaustivity in Focus: Experimental Evidence from Hungarian. In *Language Use and Linguistic Structure: Proceedings of the Olomouc Linguistics Colloquium 2013*, edited by Joseph Emonds and Markéta Janebová. Olomouc: Palacký University. 181–194.  
[link](#)
11. Hayes, Bruce, and Zsuzsa Cziráky Londe. 2006. Stochastic phonological knowledge: the case of Hungarian vowel harmony. *Phonology* 23(1):59–104.  
[link](#)
12. Hayes, Bruce, et al. 2009. Natural and unnatural constraints in Hungarian vowel harmony. *Language* 85(4):822–863.  
[link](#)
13. Kenesei, István, Robert M. Vago and Anna Fenyvesi. 1998. *Hungarian*. New York and London: Routledge.
14. Pintér, Lilla. 2018. The acquisition of asserted, presupposed, and pragmatically implied exhaustivity in Hungarian. *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 65(2-3):353–383.  
[link](#)
15. Siptár, Péter, and Miklós Torkency. 2000. *The Phonology of Hungarian*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
[link](#)

16. Szendrői, Krisztina. 2003. A stress-based approach to the syntax of Hungarian focus. *The Linguistic Review* 20:37–78.

[link](#)

17. Varga, László. 2016. The Intonation of Topic and Comment in the Hungarian Declarative Sentence. *Finno-Ugric Languages and Linguistics* 5(2):46–77.