The B.S. in linguistics offers courses in the sound, structure, and meaning of language, and it teaches students the fundamental methods of scientific inquiry. The curriculum focuses on both the internal place of language in the human mind and brain, as well as the external role of language in communication and culture. Along the way, students consider topics such as syntactic structure of world languages, semantic and pragmatic meaning, language acquisition, language disorders, language evolution, dialects and sociolinguistic variation, language and gender, computational linguistics, and many others. Students are trained to form research questions, gather data, and make arguments based upon linguistic observations. They also gain experience working with a wide range of languages and diverse cultures. In addition, the program requires a background in science and mathematics consistent with a Bachelor of Science degree at UMD, which allows students a straightforward double major in many of the established science majors at the university.

Why UMD

As the only Bachelor of Science in Linguistics in the state of Minnesota, the program at UMD has particular strengths in syntax, morphology, cognitive linguistics, semantics/pragmatics, and sociolinguistics.

In addition, we have a special interest in the languages and linguistic variations of Minnesota, including the Iron Range, languages of recent immigrants, and Minnesota English in all its past and present glory.

Acquired Skills

Linguistics majors develop:

- strong analytical skills
- experience working with languages and diverse cultures
- the ability to form research questions, gather data, and make arguments based on their observations

Career Possibilities

There is a diversity of employment opportunities for linguistics majors. The analytical skills and experience with language makes linguistic majors particularly appealing to computer and software companies, as writers and analysts of all types, in education, in projects such as speech recognition and machine translation, and as preparation for advanced study in all of the liberal arts, social sciences, and computer sciences disciplines. Finally, the United States Department of Homeland Security and federal law enforcement agencies routinely hire employees trained in linguistics.

What you can do with this degree?

Linguistics graduates will be well prepared to:

- Work for the government (national security, the Foreign Service)
- Work in the computer industry (speech recognition, text-to-speech synthesis, search engines, artificial intelligence)
- Work as a translator or interpreter
- Teach English as a second language
- Work on language documentation or conduct fieldwork
- Work in the publishing industry, as a technical writer or an editor
- Work as a dialect coach and train actors
- Pursue a graduate degree in linguistics and teach at the university level

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