Human language

is a multifaceted phenomenon. It is simultaneously a property of individual minds and of whole speech communities, and thus both internal and external to us. It both shapes and is shaped by our societies over time. It is a combination of sound (or sign), which has physical properties that can be measured, and meaning, which does not. Accordingly, becoming a linguist involves mastering a variety of methods, both quantitative and qualitative.

The BA in Linguistics

equips students with an understanding of fundamental questions driving modern linguistic research on formal structure, universals, acquisition, variation and change, and social dimensions of use; foundational knowledge in the core areas of linguistic theory; and the ability to identify and describe the empirical patterns found in language data and construct well-reasoned analyses by formulating, testing, and refining hypotheses.

Programs of study

- Major and minor in Linguistics
- Dual BA/MA in Linguistics

For more information, visit ling.bu.edu or email lingdus@bu.edu.
Some of the labs and projects run by our Linguistics faculty:

**Linguistic Semantics Lab** Elizabeth Coppock

Focus on foundational questions in semantic/pragmatic theory through empirically rich studies of diverse languages. Areas of interest include definiteness, quantification, gradability, and the fault lines where they meet.

**Phonology Lab** Jon Barnes

Investigation of pitch perception sensitivity in speakers of languages with tone systems differing in complexity (e.g., Mandarin, Cantonese), as well as whether and how pitch is processed differently in speech and music.

**Linguistic Semantics Lab** Elizabeth Coppock

Large-scale urban sociolinguistics initiative investigating the outcomes of language and dialectal contact among Spanish-speaking Bostonians and the possibility of the emergence of a Boston Spanish speech community.

**Spanish in Boston Project** Daniel Erker

Focus on phonetics, acquisition, and multilingualism, examining developments in speech production and perception over the lifetime of language learners and bi-/multilinguals via primarily behavioral methods.

**PAMLab** Charles Chang

Focus on ASL syntax; development of publicly shared linguistically annotated video corpora that serve as a basis for collaborative research with computer scientists interested in sign language recognition from video.

**ASL Linguistic Research Project** Carol Neidle

Focus on the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, typology, documentation, description, and revitalization of lesser-known languages, such as Ende, Quechua, and Northern Pomo.

**Structures of Under-researched Languages Lab** Kate Lindsey, Neil Myler