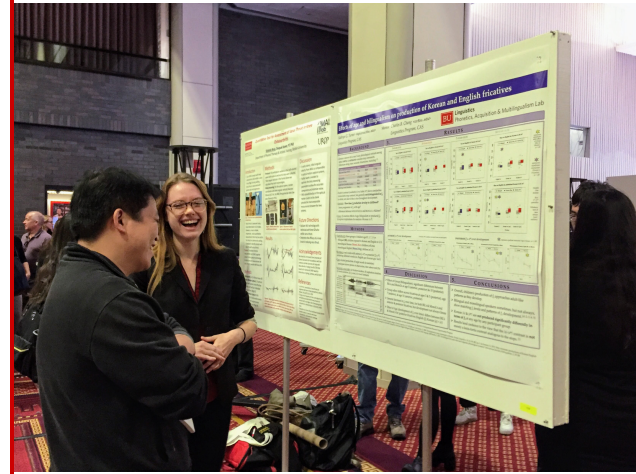


## Human language

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 PhD in Linguistics

at Boston University aims to produce scholars who are versatile enough to engage with both qualitative and quantitative aspects of linguistic inquiry, yet skilled enough to do cutting-edge research in a particular subfield of the discipline. We offer a solid grounding in a range of research methods, including field methods, quantitative methods, and computational methods.

## Areas of specialization

- Experimental approaches to phonetics and phonology
- Fieldwork and language documentation
- First and second language acquisition in children and adults; bilingualism
- Language variation and change
- Morphology, syntax, and semantics





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

**Phonology Lab**  
Jon Barnes

**Spanish in Boston**  
Daniel Erker

Large-scale urban socio-linguistic investigation of outcomes of language and dialectal contact among Spanish-speaking Bostonians and the possibility of emergence of a Spanish speech community in Boston.



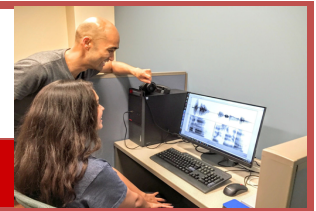
Study of foundational questions in semantic/pragmatic theory using targeted comparative fieldwork across a broad sample of languages, in-depth field studies on particular languages, and experimental techniques. Areas of focus: reference, quantification, and comparison.



**Linguistics Semantics Lab (LisLab)**  
Elizabeth Coppock

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.

**Phonetics, Acquisition, and Multilingualism Lab (PAMLab), Charles Chang**



**Fieldwork & Phonology, Kate Lynn Lindsey**

In-depth descriptive and theoretical investigation of the Pahoturi River language family of Papua New Guinea using experimental and corpus field data. Special focus on phonological phenomena, such as metrics, underspecification, harmony, and variation.



Study of ASL syntax; development of publicly shared annotation tools and linguistically annotated video corpora for ASL that serve as a basis for collaborative research in linguistics and in computer-based sign language recognition from video.

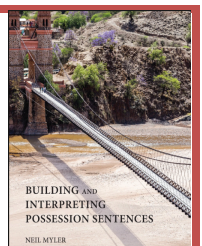
**American Sign Language Linguistic Research Project (ASLLRP), Carol Neidle**



Current focus: linguistic documentation of Northern Pomo, a dormant indigenous language of California, and creation of web-based materials to support revitalization efforts by the community.

**Language Documentation & Revitalization**  
Catherine O'Connor

Study of morphosyntactic variation, with emphasis on fieldwork (particularly on Quechua languages and non-standard English varieties). Focus on argument structure, micro-comparative syntax, and the morphosyntax and semantics of possession.



**Fieldwork & Morphosyntax Lab, Neil Myler**