Seminar manual

During the course of the seminar series, students will develop practical skills as a linguist while setting up their very first linguistic experiment: a wug test. The idea is that each practical assignment is immediately beneficial to this project, helping them to reach the end goal. The final assignment counts towards 20% of the final grade for this class, while the remaining 10% can be earned by doing the assignments seriously and handing them in on time. (Put differently, keeping up with the assignments is worth a 10 that counts for 10% towards the final grade.) Besides the practical assignments that need to be submitted, students follow the wug-checklist independently. There will be time devoted to these steps during the seminars.

This manual includes:

A. Schematic overview
B. List of weekly topics and objectives
C. List of assignments
D. Wug checklist

This manual does not include evaluation forms or extra materials that go with assignments. Assignments may refer to additional documents on Canvas or elsewhere.

Note: sometimes courses change at the last minute. Check canvas for the most recent information, and inform your instructor if you notice any discrepancies between canvas and this document.

Tip: the headers in this document are bookmarked so you can navigate through them!

A. Overview

Week	Topic/In class	Homework before class	Independent study
1	Library and getting started - Half of class: library introduction by field expert librarian Ewa Zakrzewska - Other half: What's wug got to do with it?	1. Library Skills 1 (ideally before class, but otherwise by the end of the week)	Get Library card Explore Canvas site Read the syllabus and the material for week 1
2	Collecting literature & working with resources	2. Library Skills 2 3. Glottolog 4. Bibliography	Research question Basic design
3	Research questions and research design	5. Revise bibliography 6. First draft wug test.	
4	Academic Reading & Writing I Peer-review article 1 in class	7. Review other wugs. 8. Summary Article 1	Revise wug test. Run experiment (end week 4)
5	Academic Reading & Writing II	9. Summary Article 2	Run experiment
6	Processing Data & Presentation Prep	10. Finalize wug 11. Peer review Article 2	Run experiment Structure data Interpret data
7	Presentations	12. Research presentation	Interpret data Prepare Presentation
8	Exam week – Digital MC exam on lectures and textbook		

Assignments for the seminars

1. Library Skills I (week 1)
2. Library Skills II (week 2)
3. Glottolog assignment (week 2)
4. Bibliography (week 2)
5. Revise Bibliography (week 3)
6. First draft wug test (week 3)
7. Peer-feedback on another group's wug test (week 4)
8. Academic Reading & Writing 1: summary 1 (week 4)
9. Academic Reading & Writing 2: summary 2 (week 5)
10. Finalized WUG-test (week 5)
11. Peer feedback on Summary 2 (week 6)
12. Research Presentation (week 7)

B. Weekly topics and objectives

Seminar Week 1 Info – Library 101 and Wug

The first seminar is split into two parts:

1. An introduction to the topic and method of the project we will carry out during the next few weeks. We will discuss the structure and goal of the seminar, do an in-class research exercise (if there's time), form project groups, and of course discuss the homework assignment. (This assignment indirectly asks for you to get your student ID card sorted. See here for more info.)
2. A tour of the library by our department librarian Ewa Zakrzewska. She will pick up the class in the scheduled class room, and from there we will go to the library.*

Week 1 Objectives

By the end of this class, you will

- have a clear idea of the structure and goals of the seminar and its relation to the lectures;
- have a project team and language;
- be able to locate and use the physical library;
- know how to get help in using the library.

***All groups visit the library in the second half of class.

Seminar Week 2: Finding, processing and referencing sources

This week's class is about finding, processing and referencing sources. There are three separate assignments to complete (i.e., 2 through 4; see Modules) before the seminar, which we will discuss in class.

Week 2 Objectives

By the end of this class, you

- can find various kind of resources needed for linguistic study, both online and offline;
- can find and use the Glottolog. (The lectures will also look at the WALS.)
- can write up a bibliography that adheres to a style sheet and contains different kinds of works (articles, books, et cetera);
- can name a few linguistics journals;
- have some insight in the publishing process and status of information;
- can make an informed but quick judgement call on what works are (not) relevant in the preparatory stages of a research project.

Seminar Week 3: What the wug?

This week our wug task really takes off! We finalize our bibliographies and draft our tasks, and will discuss what is important in designing a wug experiment. If there's time, we'll talk about how to read a scientific article, in preparation of next week's assignment. Please refer to the wug-checklist on canvas.

Week 3 Objective

By the end of this class, you

- will have a finalized bibliography and will be able to make an informed decision on what literature (not) to include in the preparatory stages of a research project;
- can explain what is generally important to consider when designing an experiment;
- can use different resources to improve a list of test items for a Wug in the language you chose;
- can provide feedback to improve other's experiments;
- will know what adjustments to make to your Wug experiment (such that it can be administered within a week).

Seminar Week 4: What's what? /Reading & Writing I

The homework for this class is to peer review the wug tests of other groups on Canvas and get to work with Article 1 (TBD in Week 3).

Week 4 Objective

By the end of this class, you

- will have experience reading a scientific article;
- can explain what you should be able to say or know after reading an article;
- will have practiced writing an abstract of an article for a peer,
- can explain the basic structure and content of an abstract;
- can explain the difference between citing, paraphrasing, and plagiarizing and why plagiarism is inexcusable.

Seminar Week 5: Reading & Writing II

We will discuss your progress on the experiment, but most of the class is about the second article you read and summarized. We will discuss the main points of the article and provide feedback on each other's abstracts. We will go into some aspects of writing skills.

Week 5 Objective

By the end of this class,

- your experiment is up and running
- you can summarize scientific articles
- you can explain why the two articles you have read are relevant for your research project;
- are familiar with the Jigsaw-method of sharing information.

Seminar Week 6: What's next?

This week, you will finish collecting your data, start analyzing your results, and start preparing your presentation. We will talk about processing and analyzing data in class and touch on what is important for next week's presentations. If necessary, we can revisit the peer review assignment.

Week 6 Objective

By the end of this class, you

- will have sufficient data to analyze;
- can construct a basic dataset;
- have thought about how ways to analyze your data and what they could mean;
- know what the basic requirements of an academic presentation are.

Seminar Week 7: Wrapping things up

The last class is reserved for presenting your work.

Week 7 Objective

By the end of this class, you

- can set up a basic PowerPoint presentation, hand-out or Prezi;
- will have practice speaking in front of an audience;
- can explain what your study was about in the allotted time frame;
- can motivate decisions that you made;
- can compare your study to others in a similar area.

C. Assignments

Assignment 1: Library Skills I (week 1)

1. Borrow a linguistics book from the library. (Please note that you cannot borrow a dictionary.)

2. Provide a complete reference for the book. Briefly explain why you picked this book, and motivate who you think the book was written for (who the target audience is). Compare this book to the textbook for this course (Baker et al. 2012) and write down which subsections of the textbook would be most helpful or relevant as background reading for the work you've chosen. Make sure to include your name, student number and section (group) in the file, then submit the work here on Canvas.

3. Bring your book to class OR take some pictures that give the class an idea of its content (so cover, publisher info, table of contents, plus anything to support part 2 of this assignment).

Note: You need a UvA student ID card in order to borrow library books, so if you do not have one, take the necessary steps to get yours sorted a.s.a.p.! You can find more information about your student ID by clicking here. If you cannot obtain an ID card on time for this assignment, you can do this assignment in the library. In this case, you should take a picture of the book you would otherwise have borrowed, and add that picture to the file.

Assignment 2: Library Skills II (week 2)

This digital introduction assignment will get you acquainted with the digital library, which will help you with your group assignment. It consists of two parts.

Part 1: First, complete the 'guide on the side' web tutorial. At the end of the tutorial, you will receive a certificate if you answer the questions correctly. Save a copy of that certificate (e.g. screenshot or print as pdf), you will need to upload it with part 2. The tutorial is available in Dutch or English.

Part 2: Second, study the handout that Ewa Zakrzewska made especially for us, and answer the questions in the assignment file. Merge your certificate from Part 1 with your answers to Part 2 and upload the resulting doc, docx or pdf on Canvas. (See Canvas for the handout and assignment.)

Note: The library is currently undergoing some changes, both on- and offline, and as such, the digital introduction to the library is being revamped. The webtutorial is currently still a demo. We (the library and your lecturers) are all interested in your feedback, and we ask that you take note of things that you found helpful and things you think could be improved.

Assignment 3: Glottolog assignment (week 2)

This is a group assignment.

1. Go to www.glottolog.org and look up two reference grammars of the language you are researching. Make sure that they are available in the physical library of the UvA and write down the reference information.

2. Are there any dictionaries available for your language? Take note of these works too, as you might need to look up words for your experiment later.
3. Go to the library and find your reference works. (Dictionaries and grammars cannot be borrowed, you have to spend a few minutes in the library.)
4. Take a thorough look at both grammars and motivate which of these two grammars you prefer to consult for your seminar project.
5. Would you pick the same grammar if you were looking for some grammatical information in the context of your Language X course? Motivate why (not).
6. Look up information on your phenomenon in the reference grammar. Using the reference grammar and the available native speaker knowledge in your group, describe the rules for your topic as closely as possible.
7. Write down whether you think there was any important information missing from your reference grammar on your chosen topic. (If you need further information for your project, make sure you try to get it elsewhere. You don't have to include that extra information in this assignment, though.) Note: if your test includes loans, you might also look at: www.wold.clld.org.
8. Submit your group answers online.

Note: If there are no reference grammars or dictionaries for your Language X then select other relevant publications from Glottolog.

Assignment 4: Bibliography (week 2)

This is a group assignment for your research project.

Create a bibliography (literature list) containing five sources for your research project (books, articles, et cetera). Make sure to adhere to a stylesheet!

Assignment 5: Revise Bibliography (week 3)

Review each of the bibliographies by the project groups in your section. Select the works from these lists that you think are relevant for your research project. Submit the renewed list here. We will discuss these bibliographies in class and select works for the project and the summary assignments.

Assignment 6: First draft wug test (week 3)

Submit the first draft of your wug test. It should include:

- The language you are testing
- Your research question and hypothesis, any conditions
- A brief description of the test procedure and any instructions for participants
- How many participants you think you can recruit
- Your test items (both real words and nonsense words) and the criteria for these items
- Any questions or concerns you want the reviewer to think about

Assignment 7: Peer-feedback on another group's wug test (week 4)

Look at another group's wug test. Address the following questions/topics.

- Is the research question clearly defined?
- Are there clear hypotheses and/or predictions? Do they align with the research question?
- Are there clear instructions for administering the experiment? (Would you know exactly what to do if you were running the test? How would you feel if you were a participant?)
- Do all of the nonsense words look like plausible real words? Will they help answer the research question? Do they meet any stated criteria?
- Do any of the nonsense words or real words stick out for any reason?
- Motivate whether you think the number of participants is sufficient for what the group wants to test.
- Motivate whether you would change anything.
- Can you help the group with any of their questions or concerns?

Remember to provide the feedback in the way you hope to receive it!

Assignment 8: Academic Reading & Writing 1: summary 1 (week 4)

Individual assignment: Article 1. Read the article selected in class (in week 3). Write a summary of the article; submit online **and** bring to class. See Canvas for further info.

This is an individual assignment. You will receive feedback on your writing.

Assignment 9: Academic Reading & Writing 2: summary 2 (week 5)

Write a summary of the article we determined in class in week 3. This is a group assignment. See Canvas for further info. We will discuss the content of articles in class according to the Jigsaw-method.

Assignment 10: Finalized wug-test (week 5)

Submit the final version of your wug test as it will be administered to participants.

Assignment 11: Peer feedback on Summary 2 (week 6)

Provide feedback on a classmate's summary. See details on canvas.

Assignment 12: Research Presentation (week 7)

Present your results! Your presentation should

- Be easy for you to open. Put it on a usb-stick and bring it to class. (You don't want the whole class to see what's happening in your inbox, and you don't want the class to have to wait for you to remember your password and find your slides.) Test your presentation on another computer before class to make sure everything looks the way it should.

- make use of all of the seminar assignments (and thus includes a discussion of literature, a research question and hypothesis, a description of the method with examples, the results, a brief analysis, and references)
- be understandable for someone who isn't an expert in your language
- have numbers, figures, graphs, maybe examples of errors to support your analysis
- have all group members speak/actively participate during the presentation.
- Leave enough time at the end for the audience to ask questions.

The length of the presentation depends on class size. Do **not** go over time, this is considered very rude. See canvas for the evaluation form that your instructors will use to determine your grade.

D. Wug Checklist

How to Wug?

Running an experiment is not an easy task! This guide is intended to help you in setting up your Wug test. Some of the steps in this guide are also homework assignments that you submit; others turn into assignments later on or help you conduct your study more generally. The weeks are indications for anything that doesn't have a hard deadline as an assignment. Use your *Linguistics* textbook or the internet if you run into (linguistic) terminology that is new to you.

Week 1

1. **Pick a language, a team, and a phenomenon.**
    a. Team up in small groups during class (three or four persons depending on the size of the group).
    b. Pick a language that at least one group member is proficient in. Different groups can pick the same language, but of course it's fun to have a mix of languages represented in class. Note that linguists study languages they don't speak, and should be able to explain what is happening in a language to others that don't speak that language. So this project will help you practice at least one of these skills, as all group members need to be able to explain what they are studying!
    c. Watch the videos about wug tests on Canvas. Apparently, a wug test helps reveal abstract generalized knowledge speakers have of their language in the domains of morphology and phonology. The most well-known examples pertain to inflectional (plurals, verb conjugations) and sometimes derivational morphemes (such as agentive *–er* and diminutives). The original study focussed on what children know about their language, but in this project you'll be testing adult knowledge. What 'rule' do you think they might (not) know? And why? Discuss with your group what part of your language you want to test. Is there anything in particular you want to include or exclude?

Week 2

2. **Basic design.**
    Draw up a list of 10 nonsense words and 10 real words to be used as stimuli in a simple wug test. Make use of the Glottolog assignment from week 2 and the literature you found in the library task.
    d. Exploratory studies aside, your design is determined by your research question and hypotheses, which follow from a thorough literature review. We're setting up our wug a little differently this time for practical reasons, but that doesn't mean you don't have to put into writing what you want to know and what you think you will find. (It just means that this part isn't graded at this stage.) Formulate a research question for this exercise. What are your hypothesis/hypotheses and the prediction(s) that follow(s)? What factors may impact your results? Are you comparing different conditions? Which ones?
    e. What are the criteria you used for determining whether your nonsense words were good nonsense words?
    f. What are the criteria you used for the real words? (e.g., frequency, phonological properties, meaning...)
    g. Briefly motivate your decisions: later, you might regret having included or excluded or a (nonsense) word, or someone might ask you why you did or did not do something. No

experiment is perfect, and typically mistakes or mishaps are more easily 'forgiven' if it is easy to see that the study was well-thought out. A good experiment is not a shot in the dark; it should be carefully designed so that we can try to understand what factors play a role in a given situation for a given phenomenon.

3. **Draft a test procedure.**

   Write down instructions for the person carrying out the experiment (the experimenter) and, if necessary, the participant. Will you administer your test orally or on paper? Will you need pictures? Keep the points from the previous step in mind.

4. **Who are you testing?**

   Start thinking about where and how you will recruit participants. For this project, each team member should recruit at least 3 or 4 participants, such that the group has at least 10 data points per test item, but preferably more. (In a full-scale experiment, 10 data points per item is not nearly enough, but we are just practicing now.) Remember that you are looking for native speakers! (If you are having trouble finding native speakers, proficient second-language learners will also do, but you need to report this in your presentation later.)

Week 3

5. **Peer review.**

   Review the wug drafts (research q, test and procedure) for other groups on Canvas (individually). Your group will receive feedback from students from other groups in return. Review and discuss the feedback with your group, and make any changes accordingly. Remember that an experiment is never 100% right – especially not on the first try! The goal is to make the test as neat as possible given the practical restrictions at hand, so that it is easier to interpret the data later on.

Week 4–5

6. **Administer the test.**

   Try to be as precise as possible, such that all participants are tested in the same way. If you run into difficulties and have to make changes, be sure to take note of this so you can report it later. (Also think about whether this might affect your results and why.)

Week 5–6

7. **Organize the results.**

   Structure the data and describe (without interpreting/adding your opinion) what the results are. Your research question should help you think about how to structure your data.

8. **Interpret the results.**

   Can you see any patterns? (This step is easier if your research questions, hypotheses, and predictions were clearly formulated.) Can you tie your results to previous work, et cetera?

Week 7

9. **Present your results.**

   See Assignment 12: Research Presentation (week 7)

10. **Compare your work to others. [in class]**

    What questions do you have or what new ideas do you have as you see the other groups present their work? For example:
    - Are there remarkable differences between the responses in the different languages, or are they similar?
    - What about differences in design, approach, ties to the literature, et cetera?
    - Having seen the other presentations, are there things you would do differently next time? Is there anything you are now particularly proud of? What are new research questions that you might have?