

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

MA Programme
LALS 512, Description of English 1: Grammar

TRIMESTER 2 2009
13 July to 15 November 2009

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October
Study week: 19 to 23 October
Examination/Assessment period: 27 October to 15 November

Names and contact details

Course co-ordinator: **Dr Elaine Vine**
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Office hours: appointments by arrangement



Class times and locations

Class weeks for this course for both on-campus and distance students are the weeks beginning 13, 20, 27 July, 03, 10, 17 August, 07, 14, 21, 28 September 2009. Please note that the weeks beginning 24 and 31 August (university mid-trimester break) are not class weeks.

On-campus class meeting time: Thursday, 4.10-6.00pm
Room: 24 Kelburn Parade, Room 203

Course delivery

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On-campus students attend one two-hour class per week. Classes are run as workshops. Distance students participate in discussion through the Blackboard Discussion Board. In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in discussions.

Communication of additional information

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in on-campus classes and posted on the course website in Blackboard.

Course content

This course aims to help teachers become familiar with the grammatical/syntactic systems used in English. It focuses on aspects of English grammar which are pedagogically important because they are frequently used or difficult for learners. Learning English involves more than mastering the grammar of the language. Learners have to be able to use the grammatical systems effectively to construct and interpret spoken and written texts. Thus, the course explores both formal and functional perspectives on English grammar.

Week beginning	Course Week #	Topics	Textbook reading
13 July	1	Introduction Simple sentences	Introduction Ch 3.1-3.2
20 July	2	Clause patterns Interrogatives, imperatives and negation	Ch 3.3-3.6
27 July	3	Lexical and auxiliary verbs Finite verbs	Ch 5.1-5.2 Ass 1 due by 5pm Mon 03 August 2009
03 Aug	4	Non-finite verbs Verb phrase functions	Ch 5.3-5.5
10 Aug	5	Nouns and noun phrases	Ch 4.1-4.2
17 Aug	6	Determiners Pronouns	Ch 4.3-4.5 Ass 2 due by 5pm Mon 24 August 2009
24 Aug		Trimester break - no classes	
31 Aug		Trimester break - no classes	
07 Sept	7	Adjectives Adverbs	Ch 6.1-6.2 Ass 3 due by 5pm Mon 14 September 2009
14 Sept	8	Prepositions Coordination	Ch 6.3 Ch 7.1-7.2
21 Sept	9	Ellipsis Subordination	Ch 7.3-7.4
28 Sept	10	Non-finite clauses Review	Ch 7.5
			Ass 4 due by 5pm Fri 16 October 2009

Learning objectives

By the end of this course you should:

1. have a clearer understanding of the nature and scope of the task facing learners of English as a second language with respect to grammar;
2. have an understanding of a pedagogically-relevant description of English grammar;
3. be able to identify and analyse pedagogically-significant grammatical features of English texts, both spoken and written;
4. be able to make and justify decisions about grammatical aspects of course materials, course content and teaching/learning activities.

Expected workload

Students are expected to devote a total of about 150 hours, spread throughout the trimester, to this course in order to maintain satisfactory progress. The following gives an indication of how that time may be distributed:

For each of the 10 class weeks:

- 4 hours textbook reading and exercises to prepare for class or Blackboard discussion
- 2 hours class attendance OR participation in Blackboard discussion

For the assignments (including reading, researching, analysing, writing up):

- Assignment 1: 18 hours
- Assignment 2: 18 hours
- Assignment 3: 18 hours
- Assignment 4: 36 hours

Group work

There are no formal requirements for group work in this course, but students are encouraged to work together wherever possible, either face-to-face or online as appropriate.

Readings

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of VicBooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from VicBooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop. Customers will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Essential text:

Kennedy, G. 2003. *Structure and meaning in English: A guide for teachers*. Harlow, England: Pearson/Longman. (Available from Victoria University Book Centre, www.vicbooks.co.nz or enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz, \$59.99)

In preparation for each class week you should read the required sections of the textbook (see schedule of course content above) and have a go at the practice tasks in those sections. Please note that the practice tasks are not for submission or assessment. Distance students will participate in discussions on Blackboard about the reading and the tasks, and on-campus students will have similar discussions in class meetings. On-campus classes will be run as workshops where we work together to build our understanding of the reading and the tasks.

This course will cover the Introduction and Chapters 3 to 7 of the textbook. The other chapters are relevant to other MA courses: Chapter 1 - LALS 513, Description of English 2: Phonology and morphology; Chapter 2 - LALS 522, Teaching and learning vocabulary; Chapter 8 - LALS 544, Discourse analysis.

The textbook is the only required reading for this course. The focus of the course is on developing your ability to identify and analyse relevant aspects of English grammar in texts and to see the pedagogical implications. You may find it useful to read more widely, and some suggestions will be made during the course, but this course is different from most courses in this MA programme in that wide reading is not a requirement.

Recommended Reading:

You will need to have access to at least one reference grammar of English. This is the reference grammar that I will refer to most frequently in classes and on Blackboard, and I strongly recommend it:

Biber, D., Conrad, S., and G. Leech. 2002. *Longman student grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, England: Pearson/Longman. (Available from Victoria University Book Centre, www.vicbooks.co.nz or enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz, \$49.99)

Students are also advised to ensure that they have access to at least one advanced learner's dictionary. You will find a useful list in your textbook on pp. 345-346 (Section 4, dictionaries). There is also a more recent version of the Collins Cobuild dictionary available, which I recommend that you consider if you are planning to buy a dictionary:

Collins Cobuild advanced learner's English dictionary (5th edition, including CD-ROM, 2006). Glasgow: HarperCollins. (Victoria University Book Centre, www.vicbooks.co.nz or enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz, \$59.95)

Note that having access to a good reference grammar and a good dictionary (and preferably more than one of each) is advisable for all English teachers all the time, not just for this course.

Materials and equipment

None.

Assessment requirements

This course will be examined by in-term assessment. There is no final examination. The final grade will be awarded on the basis of your marks for four assignments:

Assignment	Due date	Weighting	Required length
1	5pm Monday 03 August 2009	20%	800-900 words
2	5pm Monday 24 August 2009	20%	800-900 words
3	5pm Monday 14 September 2009	20%	800-900 words
4	5pm Friday 16 October 2009	40%	1500-1700 words

The required length applies to the 'body' of the assignment (excluding list of references and any appendices). Appendices will present your analysis, usually in the form of annotations to the text(s). The 'body' of the assignment will introduce, summarise and discuss the analysis. Provide a word count of the assignment 'body' on each assignment.

Assignments 1, 2 and 3 give you practice at analysing pedagogically-relevant aspects of the grammar of spoken and written texts. These three assignments address learning objectives 1-3 (see above). Assignment 4 also addresses learning objectives 1-3, but focuses particularly on learning objective 4 (the pedagogical implications of grammatical understanding). The course textbook lists very specific learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter.

Details of the four assignments, including marking criteria, will be provided in a separate handout. The points you will find listed under each assignment topic are intended as guidelines to help you do the assignment. They are not intended as an outline of the assignment. You should decide for yourself how best to organise and present your work. Examples of strong assignments from previous years will be made available on Blackboard to give you some ideas.

Submitting assignments

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section)

Hard copy submissions

- Type on one side of A4 paper
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves unless necessary
- Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves
- If you submit an assignment in hard copy, just one copy is required.

You can submit your assignments:

either by email to lals-512@vuw.ac.nz

or in person to the assignments drop-box outside the School office (VZ 210)

or by post to School of LALS, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.

If you submit your assignments by email, please have them in Microsoft Word (.doc) format if possible, so that I can mark them online and return them to you by email. If you submit assignments by email in other formats (e.g. rtf, pdf or WordPerfect), the process of returning them to you will take a day or two longer, as such assignments will be printed out, marked on paper, then scanned for return to you.

Your assignment will be returned to you with written feedback after I have provisionally assessed it. The School will keep a copy of each assignment for use in external and overall assessment of your MA work.

Ethical considerations for assignments

Assignment 4 requires you to collect sample(s) of written English. You must pay attention to ethical considerations when you collect samples. You must find person(s) who are willing to participate, ensure that they are appropriately informed about their participation, and obtain informed consent from them for you to copy sample(s) of their writing. You will find further details in the guidelines for Assignment 4. Make sure you start early on the assignment so that you have plenty of time to find appropriate participant(s) and to obtain their informed consent.

Penalties

Please take careful note of the length requirement for each assignment. If an assignment exceeds the word limit, only the first part of the assignment, from the beginning up to the word limit, will be considered for assessment purposes. It is important both academically and professionally that you be able to explain your ideas concisely and coherently.

Mandatory course requirements

These are the minimum course requirements which must be satisfied in order to earn the right to be assessed for a final grade. On-campus students must attend all classes and contribute to class activities and discussions. Distance students must contribute to on-line discussion at least once for each 'course week'. All students must submit all assignments. In the case of absences from class (on-campus students), or inadequate participation in on-line discussions (distance students), you may be required to submit a written task to make up for the activities missed. Any such tasks submitted must be of an acceptable standard.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/Publications.aspx>