

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

LALS 512, Description of English 1: Grammar, Trimester 2, 2008

Course Coordinator:

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Web contact: www.blackboard.victoria.ac.nz

Class times and location:

Class weeks for this course for both on-campus and distance students are the weeks beginning 7, 14, 21 and 28 July, 4 and 11 August, and 1, 8, 15 and 22 September 2008. Please note that the weeks beginning 18 and 25 August (university mid-trimester break) are not class weeks.

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

The first class meeting will be on Thursday, 10 July 2008

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
07 July	1	Introduction Simple sentences	Introduction Ch 3.1-3.2
14 July	2	Clause patterns Interrogatives, imperatives and negation	Ch 3.3-3.6
21 July	3	Lexical and auxiliary verbs Finite verbs	Ch 5.1-5.2 Ass 1 due by 5pm Mon 28 July 2008
28 July	4	Non-finite verbs Verb phrase functions	Ch 5.3-5.5
04 Aug	5	Nouns and noun phrases	Ch 4.1-4.2
11 Aug	6	Determiners Pronouns	Ch 4.3-4.5 Ass 2 due by 5pm Mon 18 August 2008
18 Aug	trimester break no classes		
25 Aug	trimester break no classes		
01 Sept	7	Adjectives Adverbs	Ch 6.1-6.2 Ass 3 due by 5pm Mon 08 September 2008
08 Sept	8	Prepositions Coordination	Ch 6.3 Ch 7.1-7.2
15 Sept	9	Ellipsis Subordination	Ch 7.3-7.4
22 Sept	10	Non-finite clauses Review	Ch 7.5
	no classes		Ass 4 due by 5pm Fri 10 October 2008

Course 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.

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 course objectives 1-3. Assignment 4 also addresses course objectives 1-3, but focuses particularly on course objective 4 (the pedagogical implications of grammatical understanding). The course textbook lists very specific learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter.

Expected Workload:

Students are expected to devote on average 12 hours per week to this course throughout the trimester in order to maintain satisfactory progress. This includes class contact hours for on-campus students.

Readings:

Required:

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:

You will need to have access to at least one reference grammar of English. I strongly recommend this one:

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)

This is the reference grammar that I will refer to most frequently in classes and on Blackboard.

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, \$39.95)

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 28 July 2008	20%	800-900 words
2	5pm Monday 18 August 2008	20%	800-900 words
3	5pm Monday 08 September 2008	20%	800-900 words
4	5pm Friday 10 October 2008	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.

Details of the four assignments 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, taking account of section 6.0 on 'Stylistic conventions' in the School's MA Programme Handbook 2008. The MA Programme Handbook 2008 is available from the School office, or you can download it from the School website (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals>) where you will find it under MA (Applied Linguistics, Linguistics, TESOL).

Statement of 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.

Submitting assignments:

General guidelines

- 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

You can submit your assignments 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, or by email to lals-512@vuw.ac.nz

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.

If you submit an assignment in hard copy, just one copy is required.

Your assignment will be returned to you with written feedback after the course coordinator has 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.

Academic integrity and plagiarism:

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

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

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

Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

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 are expected to attend all classes and contribute to class activities and discussions. Distance students are expected to 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.

Communication of additional information:

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in class for on-campus students, and posted on the course website in Blackboard for distance students.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

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* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Student and Staff Conduct
- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support