



SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

M.A. PROGRAMME

LALS 517 Special Topic: Applied Cognitive Linguistics

TRIMESTER 3 2010

8 November 2010 to 19 February 2011

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 8 November 2010 to 21 November 2010 (ten sessions in two weeks)

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Names and contact details

Course coordinator and instructor



Associate Professor Frank Boers

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In office: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. except Tuesdays. Conference leave from 5 to 20 Dec.

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Class times and locations

Monday to Friday, 16:10-18:00 (from 8 Nov to 21 Nov)

24 KP 203

Course delivery

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On campus classes are run as seminars / workshops. For distance students, all the course materials (including reading and PowerPoint presentations) will be available at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>. Blackboard is Victoria's online teaching and learning system. In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in activities and discussions. Further information about Blackboard is available under Frequently Asked Questions, under the Study tab of the School website.

Communication of additional information

Any 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 familiarise students with the principal tenets of the school of thought known as Cognitive Linguistics (CL), and how these can be applied to the field of (instructed) second language acquisition. CL emphasises the usage-based nature of language acquisition, the importance of phraseology and exemplar-based learning, and the idea that language is far less arbitrary than is often assumed. Especially the latter idea has been the impetus for a growing number of quasi-experimental studies conducted since the late 1990s to assess the proclaimed merits of CL-influenced language pedagogy. We will evaluate and 'frame' the arguments and the evidence in favour of applying CL insights to language learning and teaching, identify avenues for further research, and discuss ways of fine-tuning the pedagogical implementations.

The ten sessions will be devoted to the following topics:

- 1) Cognitive Linguistics (CL) in a nutshell
- 2) CL perspectives on cross-linguistic differences
- 3) Teaching and learning vocabulary: dealing with polysemy
- 4) Teaching and learning figurative phrases: metaphor awareness
- 5) The feasibility of learner-independent application of CL insights
- 6) Visuals and gestures: what are they good for?
- 7) Another focus on form: attending to memorable sound patterns
- 8) CL ideas for "grammar" instruction
- 9) CL perspectives on naturalistic L2 learning – the emergentist strand
- 10) Evaluation of Applied CL so far and future directions

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

- (a) compare the Cognitive Linguistics premises to those of other paradigms (e.g. Chomskyan linguistics);
- (b) recognize features of pedagogic materials that match (or clash with) Cognitive Linguistics proposals;
- (c) evaluate the body of evidence put forward in favour of Cognitive Linguistics applications in the field of SLA;
- (d) critically appraise the research methodologies adopted by pedagogy-oriented Cognitive Linguists so far;
- (e) propose future avenues for Applied Cognitive Linguistics (ACL) work.

Expected workload

It is anticipated that you will invest about 150 hours on this course. A peak investment of about 4 hours per day is expected during the two weeks of the on-campus classes.

Readings

Essential texts:

Journal articles and book chapters per class topic will be made available on Blackboard.

Class 1:

- Verspoor, M. & F. Boers (in press) The cognitive linguistics of second language acquisition. In: A. Chapelle (gen. ed.) *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Taylor, J. (2010) Language in the mind. In: De Knop, S., F. Boers & T. De Rycker (eds.) *Fostering Language Teaching Efficiency through Cognitive Linguistics*, 29-57. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Class 2:

- Slobin, D. (1996) From "thought and language" to "thinking for speaking". In: Gumperz, S. & S. Levinson (eds.) *Rethinking Linguistic Relativity*, 70-96. New York: CUP.
- Kovecses, Z. (2004) Cultural variation in metaphor. *European Journal of English Studies* 8: 263-271.

Class 3:

- Boers, F. (2000) Metaphor awareness and vocabulary retention. *Applied Linguistics* 21: 553-571.
- Verspoor, M. & W. Lowie (2003) Making sense of polysemous words. *Language Learning* 53: 547-86.

Class 4:

- Boers, F. (2001) Remembering figurative idioms by hypothesising about their origin, *Prospect* 16: 35-43.
- Boers, F., J. Eyckmans & H. Stengers (2007) Presenting figurative idioms with a touch of etymology: More than mere mnemonics? *Language Teaching Research* 11: 43-62.

Class 5:

- Littlemore, J. et al. (2010) The use of metaphor and metonymy in academic and professional discourse and their challenges for learners and teachers. In: De Knop, S., F. Boers, and T. De Rycker (eds.) *Fostering Language Teaching Efficiency through Cognitive Linguistics*, 189-211. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Hu, Y-H. & Fong, Y-Y. (2010) Obstacles to Conceptual-Metaphor guided L2 idiom interpretation. In: De Knop, S., F. Boers, and T. De Rycker (eds.) *Fostering Language Teaching Efficiency through Cognitive Linguistics*, 293-317. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Class 6:

- Lindstromberg, S. & Boers, F. (2005) From movement to metaphor with manner-of-movement verbs. *Applied Linguistics* 26: 241-61.
- Boers, F., Piquer Píriz, A.M, Stengers, H. & Eyckmans, J. (2009) Does pictorial elucidation foster recollection of idioms? *Language Teaching Research* 13: 367-82.

Class 7:

- Lindstromberg, S. & F. Boers (2008) Phonemic repetition and the learning of lexical chunks: The mnemonic power of assonance. *System* 36: 423-36.
- Deconinck, J., F. Boers and J. Eyckmans (2010) Helping learners engage with L2 words: the form-meaning fit. *AILA Review* 23.

Class 8:

- Niemeier, S. (2008) The notion of boundedness/unboundedness in the foreign language classroom. In: Boers, F. & S. Lindstromberg (eds.) *Cognitive Linguistic Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary and Phraseology*, 309-327. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Tyler, A., C.M. Mueller & V. Ho (2010) Applying Cognitive Linguistics to instructed L2 learning: the English modals. *AILA Review* 23.

Class 9:

- Wulff, S., N. C. Ellis, U. Romer, K. Bardovi-Harlig & C. J. Leblanc (2009) The acquisition of tense-aspect: converging evidence from corpora and telicity ratings. *The Modern Language Journal* 93: 354-368.
- Ellis, N. C. & F. Ferreira-Junior (2009) Construction learning as a function of frequency, frequency distribution, and function. *The Modern Language Journal* 93: 371-384.

Recommended Reading:

General:

- Boers, F. & S. Lindstromberg (2009) *Optimizing a Lexical Approach to Instructed Second Language Acquisition*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Littlemore, J. (2009). *Applying Cognitive Linguistics to Second Language Learning and Teaching*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Robinson, P. & N. C. Ellis (eds.) (2008). *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Routledge.

Per class topic, several additional journal articles and book chapters will be made available on Blackboard. These will help students explore a topic of their choice (see *assignment 1*).

Assessment requirements

Assessment will be based on three assignments:

- 1) A critical review of a sample of publications addressing an issue in ACL selected by the student (*cf.* Learning objectives [c] and [d]).
Value: 30%.
Required length: 1200-1400 words.
Due date: 21 November 2010.
- 2) A critical review from an ACL perspective of a sample of current second language textbooks (*cf.* Learning objectives [a] and [b]).
Value: 40%.
Required length: 1500-1800 words.
Due date: 15 January 2011.
- 3) An outline of a potential (small-scale) study aimed at supplementing a set of ACL findings discussed in the course (*cf.* Learning objective [e]).
Value: 30%.
Required length: 1200-1400 words.
Due date: 7 February 2011.

Submitting assignments

Submit your assignments through the Blackboard (BB) system. Instructions on how to use the BB assignment tool are on the BB website. As a backup measure only, assignments may be submitted as e-mail attachments to lals-ma@vuw.ac.nz.

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)

Deadlines and penalties

If you find that you need an extension, you **must** get explicit permission from the course coordinator before the due date. No penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. Extensions will only be granted when the assignment is not completed due to unforeseeable circumstances. Late work cannot be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Please take careful note of the length requirement for each assignment. Parts of writing in excess of the word limit may not be considered for assessment purposes.

Mandatory course requirements

All three assignments have to be submitted.

On campus students are expected to attend all ten seminars. In case of absence, they are expected to make a contribution to the discussion board regarding the class topic they missed.

Active participation to the discussion board is expected of distance students. Each session (summed up in a PowerPoint presentation put up on BB shortly after class) will be accompanied by one or two points to ponder. While campus students will react to these in class, distance students will do so on on-line.

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>

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

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_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx