



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**LALS 512 PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR OF ENGLISH**

**15 POINTS**

**TRIMESTER 2 2013**

**Important dates**

**Trimester dates:** 15 July to 17 November 2013

**Teaching dates:** 22 July to 10 October 2013

**Mid-trimester break:** 26 August to 8 September 2013

**Last assessment item due:** 4 November 2013

**Study period:** 21–25 October 2013

**Examination/Assessment Period:** 25 October to 16 November 2013

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds)

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination (aegrotats), refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)

**Class times and locations**

Thursday, 13.10 – 15.00  
von Zedlitz 204

**Names and contact details**

**Course coordinator / lecturer**

Associate Professor **Frank Boers**

Office: von Zedlitz 409

In office: On appointment

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**MA course administration at LALS:**

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Post: as above

## 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.

## Prescription

Study of the grammatical system of English with particular reference to frequency of data with a focus on using this knowledge for the preparation of teaching materials and assisting learners' language use.

## Course content

After discussing what is understood by 'grammar', we investigate the challenges that second language learners face when it comes to acquiring L2 grammar (L2 English grammar in particular). We then characterise the main strands in L2 grammar pedagogy, and evaluate these with reference to research findings. Students will weigh the benefits of different interventions and learn to make judicious decisions about grammar-instruction. The course content is planned as follows:

Week	Topic
1	Setting the stage: conceptions of "grammar"
2	Justifications for a focus on grammar
3	Textual enhancement
4	Processing Instruction
5	Interaction and feedback
6	Focused tasks in Task-Based Learning (TBLT)
7	Present – Practise – Produce (PPP)
8	From exemplars to patterns
9	Talking about grammar
10	Taking stock

## Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Make informed judgements about the need for their students to receive instruction intended to raise their awareness of particular L2 grammar features.
2. Make informed predictions about the likely benefits resulting from particular interventions intended to foster learning of particular L2 grammar features.
3. Identify the 'schools of thought' behind activities and exercises in textbooks intended for grammar learning.
4. Design and evaluate classroom activities intended to foster learning of a particular grammar feature.
5. Accurately describe the morphological and syntactic regularities of English, using accepted terminology.

## Teaching format

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance.

On campus classes are run as workshops.

For distance students, the course is delivered on-line through <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>.

In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in activities and discussions.

## Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. Submit all three assignments
2. Attend at least 8 of the 10 two-hour sessions (campus students)
3. Respond to the weekly questions posted on Blackboard (distance students).

## Workload

It is anticipated that students will invest 150 hours in this course, which includes attending classes / contributing to the discussion board on Blackboard, reading the essential and recommended texts, and preparing the assessment items.

## Assessment

The following table outlines the assessment components for LALS 512:

	Component	Value	Word count	Due date	CLOs
1.	Identify a grammar feature of English that is (a) problematic for a group of learners you are familiar with, (b) unlikely to be acquired without explicit instruction. Explain why. Contrast this with a feature that you expect to be acquired relatively easily by these learners without the need for instruction.	30%	1,500	2 Sep	1, 5
2.	Analyse, compare, and evaluate the way one and the same grammar feature is tackled in two textbooks.	30%	2,000	7 Oct	2, 3, 5
3.	Design a classroom activity (or a sequence of activities) of maximum 50 minutes intended to foster ESL/EFL students' mastery of a particular grammar feature. Describe the rationale.	40%	3,500	4 Nov	4, 5

The criteria for marking are:

- Coherence and clarity of the argumentation
- Factual accuracy of the language description
- Linkage with relevant research literature

## Submission and return of work

All assignments are to be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Feedback will be given to students also via Blackboard.

## Penalties

No penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Also consult the course coordinator in case your text exceeds the word limit. Without prior arrangements in that regard, the course coordinator maintains the right to give only minimal feedback on the text.

## Set texts

Articles to exemplify (research on) diverse approaches to L2 grammar, and a time schedule for reading them, will be made available on the LALS 512 Blackboard site.

## Recommended reading

Additional, recommended, articles on diverse strands of research on L2 grammar learning will be made available on Blackboard. These are intended to help students particularly with assignments two and three.

Students without any linguistics training will be required to familiarise themselves with descriptions of English grammar – it would be hard to make informed decisions about English grammar instruction if one had no metalinguistic knowledge of the morpho-syntactic features of the language. Many descriptive grammars of English are available. Among those the following have been found particularly helpful to past cohorts of students:

Kennedy, G. (2003). *Structure and meaning in English: A guide for teachers*. Harlow, England: Pearson/Longman.

Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Leech, G. (2002). *Longman student grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, England: Pearson/Longman.

## Class representative

The MA programme has a student representative whose name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## Student feedback

I'll be teaching this course for the first time. Student feedback is welcome at all times and will be solicited more formally in the last week of the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

## Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism)
- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances)
- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass)

- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)