

ENG 333
Grammar and Linguistics for ESL
Summer 2004



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Course Description: This course provides an introduction to the phenomenon of human language and basic linguistic principles as is appropriate for teachers of ESL. Students will examine the universal realm of “grammar” and undertake an investigative study of the grammar of English. Linguistics is a technical subject with important implications for language teachers. It should go without saying that a prospective teacher of English should be familiar with the structure of English.

Purpose and Objectives: The purpose of this course is to help students develop a broad, applied understanding of language and to provide students with the tools to conduct basic linguistic analysis. After completing the course students will be able to:

1. provide an informed definition of language;
2. define basic linguistic components;
3. explain differences between language and communication;
4. describe major subfields of linguistics;
5. conduct basic linguistic analysis;
6. describe the process of sound production in human speech;
7. explain the concept of *Universal Grammar*;
8. describe the differences between prescriptive, descriptive, and pedagogical grammar;
9. analyze and evaluate different approaches to teaching grammar
10. develop meaningful lessons for teaching grammar

The above objectives respond to Standard 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 of the North Carolina ESL Teacher Standard, which can be found at

<http://www.learnnc.org/dpi/instserv.nsf/Category4?OpenView&Start=1&Count=30&Expand=4#4>.

Texts:

Vaillette, N., & Stewart, T. (Eds.) (2001). Language files: Materials for an introduction to language and linguistics. (8th edition). Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Weaver, C. (1996). Teaching grammar in context. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

“When we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the human essence, the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to [humans].”

-Noam Chomsky (1968) *Language and Mind*

Course Requirements:

- Come to class!
- Class participation- One of the greatest learning sources you have is each other! Engaging interaction among your peers provides invaluable information.
- Readings and assignments completed before the topic is discussed in class
- Projects completed and turned in on time

Class Assignments/Projects:

1. **What is Language?** - This first project will be an individual reflection on the question, “What is language?” Begin by collecting definitions from three different sources. Note the differences and compare these definitions with your personal definition of language. Consider language issues in your immediate family, personal experiences with dialect, and/or perceptions and prejudices you have witnessed that may be based on language. The project will “unfold” in three stages: 1. Your initial definition of language from our first class; 2. findings from your investigations; and 3. how your original definition changed/expanded (or not) after viewing the film “Colorless Green Ideas...” Your reflection should be about 3 pages and is due for class 3.
2. **Language Awareness Journals**- You will respond to weekly journal prompts to reflect on the readings and discussions from the course. These responses should reflect your “expanding” awareness of language and are spaces for you to explore your opinions and questions surrounding language issues. Journals will be collected during classes #3, 6, and 9 at the beginning of class.
3. **World Languages Study**- Working within a group, you will provide a comprehensive presentation of one language from one of five geographic regions: the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, or the Pacific. Presentations must include analysis of syntactic, phonological, and morphological structures. Also include relevant social, cultural, and political information (number of speakers, regions spoken, dialects and variance, gender roles, etc.). Include in your presentation, live samples of the language “in action”, and be sure to involve activities to “engage” the class in experiencing the language. You should prepare a 20-25 minute presentation. Each member of the group will submit a written paper for their part of the presentation. The paper should include an annotated bibliography. You will be evaluated by your peers and yourself on this project.
4. **Lesson Plans**- You will submit 2 lessons plans for teaching some aspect of English grammar. The format is up to you, but must include the following: intended audience, objectives, materials and time needed, procedure, means of assessment, source for additional info. and/or follow up activities, any handouts. The lesson may be for a single

class period, or an extended unit. Bring drafts of your lessons to class # 8. You will give and receive feedback in peer groups. You are expected to bring 25? copies of your lessons to the final class to share with your colleagues.

5. **Final Exam**- The final exam will be multiple choice, matching, short answer, and essay covering the readings, discussions, and projects from the beginning of the course. Test questions will cover terminology and key topics as well as analysis and synthesis of concepts.

Evaluation

- Attendance/Participation 15%
- What is Language 10%
- Language Awareness Journals 20%
- World Languages Study 20%
- Lesson Plans 20%
- Final Exam 15%

Schedule of classes and assignments

LF= Language Files

TGC= Teaching Grammar in Context

1	June 1	Introduction <i>Set World Language groups</i> What is Language? Discuss “Language” definitions Language Properties & Universals <i>Video: “Colorless Green Ideas”</i>
2	June 3	Group work on World Language presentations <i>Reading for next time: “What Teachers Need to Know About Language” @ http://www.cal.org/resources/teachers/teachers.pdf</i>
3	June 8	Phonetics- How and where sounds are produced Phonetic transcription exercises <i>LF 3.1-3.3, 3.6-3.7</i> <i>DUE- *”What is Language” and Journals turned in</i>
4	June 10	Phonetics Exercises- LF 3.5 Group work on World Language presentations
5	June 15 <i>(class starts at 7PM)</i>	Phonology- Phonemes, Allophones, Prosody/Suprasegmentals & Meaning Phonological Rules <i>LF 4.1, Working with Language 59-71, found @ http://people.biola.edu/faculty/petes/linguistics/WWL2003.pdf</i> Morphology- Derivational vs. Inflectional, Bound vs. Free <i>“Working with Language” 76-94</i> <i>LF 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5</i>
6	June 17	Syntax- Word order, categories, Phrase Structure Trees/Rules <i>“Working with Language” 97-110</i> Semantics TBA <i>*Journals turned in</i>

7	June 22	Group Presentations- World Language Study Grammar- Evidence for/against Teaching It <i>TGC- Ch. 1 & 2</i> <i>“Grammar & Its Teaching” article</i>
8	June 24	Reconceptualizing the Teaching of Grammar <i>TGC- Ch. 5</i> Review lesson plans Group Presentations- World Language Study
9	June 29	Learning Theory & Grammar Instruction Transmission vs. Transaction <i>TGC- Ch. 6; Appendix pp.185-222</i> <i>Excerpts from Weaver’s “Lessons to Share”</i> <i>*Journals turned in</i> <i>DUE- Lesson plans (25? copies)</i>
10	July 1	Final Exam.....or not? (Groups present and provide a written synthesis of one component to class. Ex. Phonetics, grammar teaching, etc.)

Journal Topics

1. What is Language?
2. What has been Chomsky’s contribution to modern linguistics? Why is it relevant to teachers?
3. Who gives a fricative? - What’s the point of understanding where and how sounds are produced? Is this relevant/useful, or just something to memorize for the Praxis?
4. Discuss when and where you have “noticed” language. Describe an instance when you were “struck” by a difference in language around you. Identify the particularly “noticeable” elements as being phonological, morphological, or syntactical in nature.
5. Interact with the “innateness” hypothesis. Are humans really “prewired for language? Relate to a Chomsky article.
6. How does linguistic knowledge help you as a teacher in understanding errors second language students make? Respond specifically to morphology, phonology, and syntax.
7. What are your opinions on the teaching of grammar? Do ESL students need explicit grammar instruction? Do native English speakers? How do you “handle” grammar with your students?
8. Does YOUR ESL pedagogy emphasize “transmission”, “transaction”, or both? Do you hold different criteria for spoken and written language? Explain.
9. What does linguistics offer you as a language teacher? How has (or will) your teaching change from a deeper understanding of language and linguistics?

Some internet Resources on Language

<http://www.geocities.com/agihard/mohl/mohl.html>

<http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~reffland/anthropology/language/index.html>

<http://www.ilovelanguages.com/>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/>

<http://www.emich.edu/~linguist/> (The Linguist List)

<http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ichel/ichel.html> (Clearinghouse for Endangered Languages)

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD/> (Crawford’s Language Policy site)