

ENGL 3373
Modern English Syntax

Class time:	Tuesdays & Thursdays: 2:00 – 3:20 PM
Location:	ENGL 3383.D21/Moodle
Instructor:	Dr. Min-Joo Kim
Office hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays , 3:30-4:30 PM, Wednesdays , 3:30-4:30.
E-mail:	min-joo.kim@ttu.edu (best way to contact)

I. Information on the Course

A. Course Description

This course provides an overview on the structure and usage of modern (i.e., present-day) American English. The material covered will equip the students with a basic knowledge of the form and function of what is known as Standard American English, and it will be particularly relevant and useful to future English teachers and students interested in English language/linguistics. Topics include but are not limited to (i) basic word structure, (ii) classification of words into what is traditionally known as ‘parts of speech’, (iii) description and analysis of various types of phrase structure and sentence structure, (iv) prescriptive versus descriptive approaches to grammar, and (v) stylistic and dialectal variation in English syntax. Time permitting, we may also discuss (vi) grammaticalization and language change.

B. Textbooks (Additional materials will be provided by the instructor via e-mail or Moodle)

Required:

- Huddleston, Rodney and Geoffrey Pullum. 2005. *A Student’s Introduction to English Grammar*. Cambridge University Press. (This book offers a comprehensive overview on English Syntax without any specific commitments to any particular theoretic frameworks.)

Recommended:

- Gelderen, Elly van. 2010. *An Introduction to the Grammar of English*. John Benjamins. (This book provides a more in-depth analysis of English syntax within the framework of Generative (i.e., Chomskyan) Grammar and therefore is more theory-oriented than H&P’s book.)
- Battistella, Edwin L. 2005. *Bad Language: Are Some Words Better than Others?* Oxford University Press. (This book deals with prescriptive vs. descriptive approaches to grammar, various others sociolinguistic issues, dialectal variations, and language/grammar teaching at the K-12 level.)

C. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- differentiate between descriptive grammar and prescriptive grammar;
- identify and appreciate similarities and differences between different varieties of English;
- recognize and appreciate that every linguistic system is equally complex and creative;
- analyze English words in terms of their morphological structure;
- identify different types of categories or ‘parts of speech’ by using syntactic diagnostics;
- identify various types of phrases and constituents in English;
- analyze basic sentential structures by using tree diagrams or bracketed notations;
- differentiate between embedded/non-embedded clauses and finite/non-finite clauses;
- gain an initial understanding of how to form questions and relative clauses.

Students will be able to acquire what are listed above by **taking ownership of their own learning**. More specifically, they will need to do the following:

- Come to every class prepared and on time.
- Do all homework assignments in a timely manner
- Actively participate in class activities of all kinds.
- Clear up any confusion as soon as possible.
- Get in touch with the instructor regarding any issues related to this class.

D. Criteria for Assessment

Type of requirement	Proportion in the final grade
(i) Attendance and participation	10%
(ii) Weekly homework assignments	40% (4% x 10)
(iii) Short mid-term paper (3 pages//900-1000 words long)	10%
(iv) Presentation on your short paper	3%
(v) Final research paper proposal (2 pages)	5%
(vi) Final research paper (6 pages/1900-2000 words long)	25%
(vii) Presentation on your final paper	7%
Total	100%

Relation between numeric scores and letter grades

(i) 95 – 100	A+
(ii) 90 – 94.99	A
(iii) 85 – 89.99	B+
(iv) 80 – 84.99	B
(v) 75 – 79.99	C+
(vi) 70 – 74.99	C
(vii) 65 – 69.99	D+
(viii) 60 – 64.99	D
(ix) Below 60	F

Attendance and participation (5%):

- Attendance will be checked in **every single class**. Attendance is known to correlate positively with success in higher education, so I require attendance to help you to make good choices during your college career.
- **More than 3 absences** will result in a grade of **F for class attendance** (i.e., 0 for the 10% of your course grade); **more than 6 absences** will result in **failure of the course**.
- Class attendance will be registered when you **make a comment in class**, not just by entering the chat session. Thus, **in order to earn an average grade (a C)** for class participation, you must make at least one comment in each class session you attend. **To earn a B**, you must make more than one comment in each session. **To earn an A**, your comments must be highly pertinent to class discussion, appropriate, compelling, and/or challenging; that is, you must be making **good** comments. Your comments need not always be “right” in order to earn an A. Great questions are always encouraged and they can furthermore help you earn an A for class participation.

Homework assignments (40%):

- As a way to help you to exercise and internalize what we are learning in class, there will be homework assignments **almost every week**.
- Homeworks will most likely be in the form of a short quiz and each homework will take up 4% of your entire course grade.
- Lectures will typically have some sort of homework review incorporated in them and during the review session, you are **expected to comment on or address issues** related to the homework under discussion.

Short mid-term paper (10%) + Presentation on it (3%) (13% in total):

- Half way into the semester, you'll be submitting a short paper (**3pages or 900-1000 words long, double-spaced, in Times New Roman, font size 12**) and make a brief presentation on it in class by using the chat mode. (Your paper is due **Thursday, October 17**; you'll be making a presentation in that week.)
- In this paper, you will reflect on what you have learned in this course thus far and discuss what has been most interesting, challenging, surprising, and/or thought-provoking about the grammar of English you have uncovered by taking this course. Ideally, you pick one particular topic or issue and delve into it but you may choose to pick two different topics if they are inter-related or you can discuss them in ways that they will be nicely/seamlessly tied together.
- During class, you'll be briefly reporting on your paper to your peers and answer any questions or comments they may ask or make on your presentation. More on this later.
- There must be **section headings** and **page numbers** in your paper; this applies to **all types of writing** you submit in this course.

Final research paper: proposal (5%), paper (25%), and presentation (7%) (37% in total):

- In this course, you will be writing a final research paper (which weighs the most heavily) and as a way to help you to produce a good-quality paper, I require that you submit a well-written paper **proposal by the evening of Thursday, November 7**.
- Your proposal must be **two-pages long, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman, font size 12**. And it must **clearly outline the plan for your research paper** by addressing what the overarching research topic is, why the topic is important, and what kind of specific question(s) you will be addressing in your paper. In addition, it must include some of the **crucial existing works** you'll be citing in your paper (e.g., a peer-reviewed journal article, a book chapter, or a book).
- Your final research paper should be **6-7 pages or 1800-2000 words long, double-spaced, excluding references**. There must be **section headings and page numbers**.
- Your paper must be drawing on credible and peer-reviewed sources. Therefore, I require that you cite **at least 6 published and credible works** on the topic at hand (e.g., **peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and book chapters**), regardless of whether they are available as on-line or in print.
- You can adopt the **MLA style** or any prestigious linguistics journal's style (e.g., *Linguistic Inquiry* or *Language*) for citations. But whatever style is adopted, it must be done consistently. Furthermore, you can only cite works that are listed in the "references" section. Conversely, if you list a work under "references", then you must cite it in the text.
- **Evaluation criteria for your paper:** (i) organization (20%); (ii) style & clarity of exposition (20%); (iii) thoroughness & accuracy of the literature review (40%); and (iv) originality (20%).
- As is the case with the short paper, you'll be sharing your research findings with the entire class by making a **presentation on it and responding to any questions from your peers in an appropriate and scholarly manner**. More on this later.

- **Possible topics for your final paper** (you're welcome to explore any other topic as long as they are approved by me):
 - a) Grammatical similarities and differences between Standard Modern American English (SAE) and other varieties English (e.g., Standard British English, African American English (a.k.a. African American Vernacular English or Ebonics), Texas English, Chicano English/Tex-Mex.
 - b) Comparison between SAE and another language (e.g., Spanish, German, French, Japanese) or Middle or Old English
 - c) Grammatical analysis of English as a second language (ESL), in particular typical grammatical "errors" made by second language learners and their structural characteristics.
 - d) Grammaticalization of certain lexical items: e.g., the word 'like' in *I was like, XX*.

E. Schedule (Subject to Change with a prior notice): Below the chapters are from the H&P book.

Week/Date	Topic	Reading/Notes
Week 1: 8/27 & 8/29	Introduction & prescriptive vs. descriptive grammar	Ch. 1 Homework (HW) 1 given out.
Week 2: 9/3 & 9/5	HW 1 review & Morphology	Ch. 16 HW 2 given out
Week 3: 9/10 & 9/12	HW 2 review & Grammatical functions	Ch. 4 HW 3 given out
Week 4: 9/17 & 9/19	HW 3 review & Verbs, tense, aspect and mood	Ch. 3 HW 4 given out
Week 5: 9/24 & 9/26	HW 4 review & Nouns and noun phrases	Ch. 5 HW 5 given out
Week 6: 10/1 & 10/3	HW 5 review & Adjectives and adverbs	Ch. 6 HW 6 given out
Week 7: 10/8 & 10/10	HW 6 review & Prepositions and prepositional phrases	Ch. 7
Week 8: 10/15 & 10/17	Catching up/loose ends	Short mid-term paper due at class
Week 9: 10/22 & 10/24	Clause type: asking, exclaiming, and directing	Ch. 9 HW 7 given out.
Week 10: 10/29 & 10/31	HW 7 review & Subordination and content clauses	Ch. 10 HW 8 given out.
Week 11: 11/5 & 11/7	HW 8 review & Relative clauses	Ch. 11 HW 9 given out. Paper proposal due at class
Week 12: 11/12 & 11/14	HW 9 review & Relative clauses cont. & non-finite clauses and clauses without verbs	Ch. 11 & Ch. 13 HW 10 given out.
Week 13: 11/19 & 11/21	HW 10 review & Information packaging in the clause	Ch. 15
Week 14: 11/26 & 11/28	No class: Thanksgiving Holiday	
Week 15: 12/3 & 12/5	Catching up/loose ends	Last day of classes Final-paper due at class

II. Course Policies

A. Basic Course-Related Policies

- To earn a passing grade, students must successfully complete **all course requirements** stated in the syllabus and in e-mail correspondences. In addition, students must demonstrate that they are **fully in charge of their own learning**.
- In the event of **missing the class** for an **unavoidable reason**, students must inform the instructor as soon as possible. See also what is stated above under “**Attendance**” above.
- Students must be **punctual** to respect other students’ and the instructor’s time. That is, you must log in to Moodle and enter the relevant chat session for our class **a couple of minutes before each class**.
- Being late for class **more than three times** will lead to lowering the course grade by one level (e.g., an A becomes a B).
- **No late submission** of any written work or **make-up homework** will be accepted. Each due date is found on the course syllabus and exactly in what way written assignments will be submitted will be announced in class.
- Announcements will be made both in class and via e-mail. E-mail announcements including **information about course lecture notes** will be sent to **students’ TTU e-mail** account. Therefore students must check their TTU e-mails every day.
- Students are encouraged to set up appointments with the instructor when issues regarding this course come up or just to clear up any confusion about the course content.
- Constructive feedback about the course is encouraged at any time.

B. E-mail Rules

- I check e-mail throughout the day from Monday through Friday, but please allow 24 hours for a response from me during business days. Between Friday evenings and Sunday nights, I can rarely check e-mail for family reasons. So if you send me an e-mail over the weekend, you will most likely receive a response from me the following Monday morning.
- To ensure that your e-mail reaches me safely, please put ENGL 3373 or Modern English Syntax in the “subject” header at all times. In addition, please provide your full names (both first and last names) in the e-mail text, so that I will know who the sender is; non-Tech email accounts usually do not provide such important information.
- Remember to be polite and respectful, and be careful and attentive to how the email is written; students are expected to use **professional language** and tone in all communications with the instructor, including e-mail correspondences. E-mails should be **limited to quick inquiries or requests**; that is, students must use **office hours or appointments** to discuss **more complex questions**, issues, or concerns about the course.
- If you do not receive an e-mail response from me within the specified response times above, take another look at the construction of your e-mail. The tardiness or lack of a response on our part may be the result of an inattention to the prescribed method of professional e-mail correspondence. In that case, please revise with proper attention to e-mail etiquette and resend the e-mail.

C. Civility in the “Classroom”

- Students are expected to help maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Appropriate student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the telephone) creates a better environment for learning (not to mention for teaching).

- Students are not allowed to chat with someone in class about personal matters, to text-message, to talk on the phone, or to speak rudely to another student or the instructor during chat sessions.
- Such inappropriate behavior will minimally result in a **request to leave class**. In extreme cases, it may even lead to **lowering the course grade by one level** (i.e., a B becomes a C).
- Students are encouraged to participate actively in class but **no one should dominate the entire class discussion**. Such behavior will be considered inappropriate and hence will be subject to the same set of course policies as stated above.

D. Academic Integrity

- This course follows the University's statement on academic integrity, namely, "It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity" (*Bulletin of Texas Tech*, p. 82).
- It also abides by the Code of Student Conduct as laid out in the Student Affairs Handbook (<http://www.studentaffairs.ttu.edu/campuslife/handbook.pdf>). Failure to uphold such guidelines may result in one or more of the following penalties, depending on the instructor's assessment of the seriousness of the violation: e.g., failing grade on an assignment or for the entire course, reporting to the Dean of Students, referral for disciplinary action to the Student Mediation Center or other relevant disciplinary action.
- This class has no tolerance for cheating or plagiarism: plagiarism or cheating will result in an **automatic F** regardless of the reason.
- **What counts as cheating:**
 - dishonesty on examinations, quizzes, and written assignments.
 - illegal possession of examinations.
 - use of unauthorized notes during an exam or quiz.
 - obtaining information during an exam from an unauthorized source or from another student.
 - help others to cheat.
 - alteration of grade records.
 - illegal entry to or unauthorized presence in the instructor's or her department's office.
- **What counts as plagiarism:**
 - Plagiarism means using other people's work as if it were his/her own without proper acknowledgments.
 - Therefore, any student will be guilty of plagiarism if he or she fails to give credit for quotations or use essentially identical expressions of material taken from other sources including books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and the writings of other people.

E. Students with Disabilities

- Any student with disabilities who needs special arrangements to minimize the effects of their disabilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. But students must present appropriate verification from TechAccess first.

In sum, how to succeed in this class:
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Be on time for each and every class. Be "visible" and "audible" in each and every class. Do your weekly homeworks in a timely way. Resort to the syllabus for all due dates (read your syllabus frequently). Touch base with the instructor and do not fall behind. Try to apply what you're learning in this class to your daily life.
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