

**ENGL 3373**  
**Modern English Syntax**

Class time:	Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM
Location:	English/Philosophy Bldg. Rm 360
Instructor:	Dr. Min-Joo Kim (Office: English/Philosophy Bldg. Rm 480)
E-mail:	<a href="mailto:min-joo.kim@ttu.edu">min-joo.kim@ttu.edu</a> (best way to contact)
Website:	<a href="http://webpages.acs.ttu.edu/minjkim/">http://webpages.acs.ttu.edu/minjkim/</a>
Office hours:	<b>Tuesdays &amp; Thursdays, 12:30-1:50 PM</b> (or by appointment)

## **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 and linguistics. Topics include but are not limited to (i) prescriptive vs. descriptive approaches to grammar, (ii) dialectal variation in English syntax, (iii) basic word structure, (iv) classification of words into categories or what are traditionally known as “parts of speech”, (v) various types of phrases and their internal structures, (vi) morphology/syntax of English verbs and Tense/Aspect/Mood, and (vii) grammaticalization and language change.

### **B. Textbooks**

**Required** (needed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> class at the latest.)

- **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, so 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 other sociolinguistic issues, dialectal variations, and language 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 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 and non-embedded clauses;
- differentiate between complement clauses and clausal modifiers, i.e., relative clauses;
- gain an initial understanding of the syntax and semantics of relative clauses.

Students will be able to acquire such knowledge and skills by **taking ownership of their own learning**. More specifically, they will need to do the following:

- Read the syllabus frequently and be on top of the course expectations.
- Come to every class prepared and on time.
- Do all homework assignments in a timely manner.
- Actively participate in class activities.
- Clarify any confusion as soon as possible.
- Touch-base with the instructor regarding any course-related matters.

**D. Criteria for Assessment**

Assessment category	Proportion in the final grade
(i) Attendance and participation	10%
(ii) Weekly homework assignments	40% (4% x 10)
(iii) Mid-term exam	15%
(iv) Term-paper (6-7 pages/1900-2000 words long)	20%
(v) Paper proposal (2 pages/400-450 words long)	5%
(vi) Presentation on the final paper	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Attendance and Participation (10%):**

- **Each absence** except for the first one will incur **-0.5 point** of the entire course grade.
- **More than 3 absences** will result in a grade of **F for class attendance**, and **more than 6 absences** will result in **F for the course**, unless such absences can be **justified by proper documentation** (e.g., doctor’s note; proof of hospitalization; evidence for a family emergency).
- In the event of missing class, the student must **notify the instructor as soon as possible via e-mail**. Such notifications cannot prevent the student from losing 0.5 point of the course grade for the absence but it will be taken into account when the final course grade is being calculated.
- This portion of the grade is also about participation, so in order to receive **full credit points**, the student must **actively participate** in class discussions and make **pertinent and appropriate comments** on the subject matter whenever possible.

**Homework Assignments (40%):**

- There will be homework assignments given out almost every week and this is to help you to internalize what we are learning in class.
- Each homework will take up **4%** of your **course grade** and all homework assignments must be submitted as a **hard copy at class on the day when it is due**.
- During the homework review sessions in class, students will be expected to **share** their answers to homework problems with the rest of the class, thereby contributing to our collective knowledge building as well as our intellectual growth.

**Mid-term Exam (15%) (Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>):**

- There will be an in-class mid-term exam in mid October. This exam is to test how you’re doing in this class on the **analytical and technical side** of the course content/material.
- The exam will be **based largely on the weekly homeworks** that have been given out by that point of the semester, but it may also cover **anything** that was discussed in class. Therefore,

**attending each class** attentively and **doing all your homework assignments** in a timely manner will be crucial for your success in this course.

**Final term-paper (20%) (due by 11 PM, Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, electronically):**

- This course has no final exam; instead, you will be writing a final term-paper, demonstrating your ability to conduct guided but primarily **independent research**.
- You're encouraged to work on any topic related to the course, but you must have your paper topic **approved by me** by submitting a well-written **proposal** for it by early November. See below.
- Your final paper should be **6-7 pages long** or **comprised of 1900-2000 words, double-spaced, excluding references** (i.e., list of works cited), and there must be **section headings** and **page numbers**.
- Since this will be a research paper submitted for academic purposes, you must rely only on **credible** sources, i.e., **peer-reviewed** linguistic journal articles, book chapters, and books. And you must cite **at least 6 published works on the topic at hand**, whether they are available online or in print.
- For **citations**, you may adopt the MLA style or the style of any prestigious linguistics journal such as *Linguistic Inquiry* and *Language*. 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:** (i) organization (20%); (ii) style & clarity of exposition (20%); (iii) thoroughness & accuracy of the literature review (40%); and (iv) originality (20%).
- **Possible topics for your paper:** you're welcome to explore other topics and to visit with me before selecting your topic.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Grammatical similarities and differences between Standard Modern American English (SAE) and other varieties English (e.g., Standard British English, African American English/African American Vernacular English (or "Ebonics"), Texas English, Chicano English/Tex-Mex;</li><li>b) Comparison between SAE and another language (e.g., Spanish, German, French, Japanese) or Middle English or Old English;</li><li>c) Grammatical analysis of English as a second language (ESL), in particular typical grammatical "errors" made by second language learners and their structural characteristics;</li><li>d) Differences and similarities between the verbal domain and the nominal domain of present-day English;</li><li>e) Correlation between the morphological properties and syntactic properties of present-day English.</li></ul> |
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**Paper Proposal (5%) (due at class on Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, as a hard copy):**

- Any good work comes from a solid planning, so in order to produce a good-quality paper, you must write a good paper proposal, clearly outlining the **research plan** of your paper.
- More specifically, your proposal needs to have a clear statement on: (i) what the overarching **research topic** is; (ii) why it is **important**; and (iii) what kind of **specific question(s)** you will be addressing in your paper.
- In addition, your proposal must include some of the **crucial existing works** that you'll be citing or building on in your paper (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and/or books).
- Your proposal must be **two-pages long** or **comprised of 400-450 words, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman, font size 12**.
- More instructions will be given later with a sample proposal.

**Presentation on the final paper (10%) (at the end of the term, in-class):**

- As a member of an intellectual community, you will be sharing the findings of your final paper by making an in-class presentation on it on the last day of classes.
- Your presentation must be done in a manner that is **appropriate for an academic setting**. In addition, it must be accompanied by a **1-2 paged, audience-friendly, hard-copy handout** which outlines the major findings of your paper.
- More detailed instructions on your handout will be given out later.
- **Evaluation criteria for your presentation:** (i) organization (30%); (ii) solidity of the content (50%); and (iii) effectiveness of delivery (e.g., clarity, ability to maintain the audience's interest/attention, professional demeanor) (20%).

**E. Schedule (Subject to change; below, the chapters are from our required textbook.)**

<b>Week/Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Notes</b>
Week 1: Aug. 26 Aug. 28	Introduction & overview on the course Prescriptive vs. descriptive grammar	Ch. 1 & 2 Homework (HW) 1 given out
Week 2: Sept. 2 Sept. 4	HW 1 review Morphology	HW 1 due at class Ch. 16/HW2 given out
Week 3: Sept. 9 Sept. 11	HW 2 review Clause structure, complements, and adjuncts	HW 2 due Ch. 4/HW 3 given out
Week 4: Sept. 16 Sept. 18	HW 3 review Clause structure, complements, and adjuncts cont.	HW 3 due HW 4 given out
Week 5: Sept. 23 Sept. 25	HW 4 review Verbs and tense	HW 4 due Ch. 3/HW 5 given out
Week 6: Sept. 30 Oct. 2	HW 5 review Verbs, tense, and aspect	HW 5 due HW 6 given out
Week 7: Oct. 7 Oct. 9	HW 6 review Tense/aspect/mood and clause type	HW 6 due Ch. 3 & 9/HW 7 given out
Week 8: Oct. 14 Oct. 16	HW 7 review <b>In-class exam</b>	HW 7 due
Week 9: Oct. 21 Oct. 23	Nouns and noun phrases Cont.	Ch. 5 HW 8 given out
Week 10: Oct. 28 Oct. 30	HW 8 review <b>No class: self-study</b>	<b>Instructor at a conference</b>
Week 11: Nov. 4  Nov. 6	Adjectives and adverbs  Subordination and content clauses	Ch. 6/ <b>Paper proposal due at class</b> Ch. 10/HW 9 given out
Week 12: Nov 11 Nov. 13	HW 9 review Relative clauses (RCs)	Ch. 11
Week 13: Nov. 18 Nov. 20	RC cont. Loose ends/catch-up	HW 10 given out
Week 14: Nov. 25 Nov. 27	HW 10 review <b>Thanksgiving break: No classes</b>	HW 10 due
Week 15: Dec. 2 Dec. 4	<b>Last class day: Student presentations</b> No class and no final exam	<b>Final paper due 11 PM via e-mail</b>

## II. Course Policies

### A. Basic Course-Related Policies

- To earn a passing grade in this course, students must successfully complete **all course requirements** stated in the syllabus.
- In the event of missing a class for an unavoidable reason, students must **inform the instructor as soon as possible**. See also what is stated above under *Attendance and Participation*.
- Students must be **punctual** to respect other students' and the instructor's time. 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 including homework assignments will be accepted.
- Announcements will frequently be made **via TTU e-mail**. Therefore students must **check their TTU e-mails every day** to receive such information in a timely way.
- 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

- E-mails should be **limited to quick inquiries or requests** and students must use office hours or appointments to discuss more complex questions, issues, or concerns about the course.
- 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 **cannot** readily check e-mail. So if you send me an e-mail during that time, you will most likely receive a response from me the following Monday.
- To ensure that your e-mail reaches me safely, please put "ENGL 3373" or "Modern English Syntax" in the **subject line** of your e-mail. In addition, please provide your **full name** (both first and last) in the **e-mail text**, so that I will know who the sender is; non-Tech email accounts often do not provide such important information.
- Students are expected to use **professional language** and tone in all communications with the instructor, including e-mail correspondences. So please read your e-mail before you send it to me and make sure that it sounds **polite and respectful**, as well as **clear and to the point**.

### 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 phone) creates a better environment for learning.
- Students are **not** allowed to **chat** with someone in class about personal matters, or to **text-message, talk on the phone, or speak** rudely to another student or the instructor.
- 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 class discussion. Such behavior will be considered **inappropriate**, so will be subject to the same set of 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., a **failing grade** on an assignment or for the entire course, **reporting to the Dean of the student**, **referral** for disciplinary action to the **Student Mediation Center**, or other relevant disciplinary action.
- This class has **zero 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 someone else's work as if it were his/her own.
  - Therefore, any student will be guilty of plagiarism if he or she **fails to give credit** for quotations or to use **essentially identical** expressions of material taken from other sources including books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and the writings of other people **without acknowledging** the source.

#### **E. Students with Disabilities**

- Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present **appropriate verification from Student Disability Services** during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided.
- For additional information, please contact **Student Disability Services in West Hall** or call **806.742.2405**.