

**Studies in Linguistics: Languages of the World (ENGL 4373)****I. Logistics**

**Class time:** T/Th, 11:00 – 12:20 PM (from Jan 10 to April 29)

**Location:** English/Philosophy building Rm 362

**Instructor Information:**

**Name:** Dr. Min-Joo Kim  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesday 3:40-5:00 PM  
Wednesday 2:40-4:00 PM  
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**II. Information on the course****Course Description and Objectives:**

This course is concerned with language variation. We will explore this topic by addressing the following questions:

- (i) How are languages of the world different from each other?
- (ii) How are they similar to each other?
- (iii) Do the different ways in which the languages package information cause speakers to pay attention to different aspects of their worlds?
- (iv) Are there hidden dimensions in English grammar that are openly expressed in other languages?
- (v) Are unrelated languages like English and Japanese really just two different ways of speaking the same language?

In addition, time permitting, we will investigate how geographic proximity influences the structure of a language and yet how certain core linguistic properties hold of languages regardless of their geographical closeness. In this regard, this course will serve as an introduction to language typology and linguistic universals.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to do the following:

- To have basic knowledge of the worlds' languages and how they are classified.
- To be able to conduct a preliminary fieldwork in linguistic documentation.
- To define different types of categories or “parts of speech”
- To be able to read and understand morpho-syntactic data from various languages
- To be familiar with linguistic typological terms such as linguistic universals, thematic roles, grammatical functions, tense and aspect, mood, subordination, and relativization.

- To gain an initial understanding of syntactic operations such as how questions, relative clauses, and passives are formed.
- To see connections between surface syntactic forms and information packaging.
- To gain basic understanding of two rather different approaches to linguistic theorizing, namely, functional and formal approaches.

You will be able to acquire the aforementioned skills and knowledge by doing the following:

- Come to every class on time, follow lectures attentively, and participate actively in class discussion.
- Do all the reading assignments in a timely fashion.
- Take a proactive approach to the requirements and start working on them as soon as possible.
- Clear up any confusion you may have as soon as possible by asking questions in class or by meeting with the professor during office hours or at any other mutually convenient time.

#### Criteria for Assessment:

Attendance	10% of the entire grade
2 short tests	20%
Language journal	20%
Final project proposal	Not-graded but required
Presentation on the final project	20%
Term-paper	30%

**Attendance (10%)**: Attendance will be checked in **every class**.

**2 short tests (20%, 10% each)**: You will be tested on the basic concepts and terminologies of linguistic typology covered in the class. The tests are divided into two, so that you can fully digest the information covered up to that point in the semester. The tests will be designed in such a way as to help you to work on other projects, namely, the language journal and the final term-paper.

**Language journal (20%)**: You will carry out an in-depth study of a relatively under-studied language such as Vietnamese or Navajo, an American Indian language by comparing it with Modern American English, on the basis of the linguistic features studied in the course. You should discuss how the “exotic” language and English are similar to and different from each other by providing concrete linguistic data from both languages.

The journal will be **5-6 pages, double-spaced** and must be submitted at the beginning of the class on the due date, i.e., **March 13**. No electronic submission will be accepted.

Students will make an **informal presentation on the language journal**. The presentation will not be graded but **required**; failure to make a presentation will **lower the grade by one level** (e.g., a B will become a C+). Even though the presentation won't be graded, it is considered extremely important for two reasons. First, it will serve as a nice venue for everyone in class to learn about languages other than those that are mentioned or discussed in the textbook. Second, it will help the students to do a better job when they present on their term-paper projects at the end of the semester.

Useful guide for keeping a language journal or conducting a linguistic fieldwork:  
<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/lingfieldwork/>

**Final project (50%):** You will work on **five to six unrelated languages** and **compare them** with respect to a **particular topic** in linguistics, such as how languages mark grammatical functions (e.g., subject and object), how they express relativization, what is responsible for word order variation, and why do questions in languages like English involve movement but questions in languages like Japanese and Korean do not.

The final project has **three** components to it:

- (i) **A written proposal (due April 3) (not graded but required):** a **1-paged** short essay which clearly outlines the topic you are interested to investigate, providing the information about the languages you will be looking at, and the **initial literature** review, including the list of references you will build on.
- (ii) **An oral presentation of the findings** (exact dates to be determined later) (**20%** of the final grade): Tips on how to give a good presentation will be given later.
- (iii) **Final paper (due April 29 in class) (30% of the final grade): 9-10 pages and double-spaced.** Should be **typed and stapled**, and must be submitted in class. **No electronic submission will be accepted.** Tips on how to write the paper will be given later.

**Textbook** (available at the campus bookstore):

Whaley, Lindsay, J. 1997. *Introduction to Typology: The Unity and Diversity of Language*. Sage publications.

**Other recommended textbooks** (available in the TTU Library):

Comrie, Bernard. 1989. *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. The University of Chicago Press.

Croft, William. 1990. *Typology and Universals*. Cambridge University Press.

Upon request, I'll also provide some additional readings.

**Schedule: Subject to Change.** (The readings must be done **in advance**.)

Day, Date	Content	Reading	Notes
Th, 1/10	Orientation		
T, 1/11	Intro to linguistic typology and history of typology	Chapters 1 and 2	
Th, 1/15	Issues surrounding typological research methodology	Ch. 3	
T, 1/17	Basic categories or parts of speech	Ch. 4	
Th, 1/22	Constituent order universals	Ch. 5, 6	
T, 1/29	Types of morphemes	Ch. 7	
Th, 1/31	Morphological typology	Ch. 8	
T, 2/5	Case and agreement	Ch. 9	

Th, 2/7	Animacy, definiteness, and gender	Ch. 10	
T, 2/12	Valence	Ch. 11	
Th, 2/14	Review		
T, 2/19	<b>Test 1</b>		
Th, 2/21	Tense and aspect	Ch. 12	
T, 2/26	Mood and negation	Ch. 13	
Th, 2/28	Morphosyntax of speech acts	Ch. 14	
T, 3/4	<b>A guest lecture:</b> a closer look at an “exotic” language		
Th, 3/6	<b>Presentation on language journal</b>		<b>(March 5:</b> mid semester grade due)
T, 3/11	<b>Presentation on language journal</b>		<b>(March 12:</b> last day to drop a course)
Th, 3/13	<b>Presentation on language journal</b>		<b>Language journal due</b>
T, 3/18	<b>Spring break (No class)</b>		
Th, 3/20	<b>Spring break (No class)</b>		
T, 3/25	Subordination	Ch. 15	
Th, 3/27	Cont’d		
T, 4/1	Coordination and co-subordination	Ch. 16	
Th, 4/3	Cont’d		<b>Term-paper proposal due</b>
T, 4/8	Review		
Th, 4/10	<b>Test 2</b>		
T, 4/15	<b>Student presentations</b>		
Th, 4/17	<b>Student presentations</b>		
T, 4/22	<b>Student presentations</b>		
Th, 4/24	<b>Student presentations</b>		
T, 4/29	<b>Student presentations &amp; wrap-up</b>		<b>Final project due</b>

### III. Course policy

#### Basic course-related requirements:

- Students must be PRESENT, PUNCTUAL, AND PREPARED for each class. To avoid being penalized unnecessarily, students should inform their professor, **in advance** when possible, and **immediately after** any inevitable or special situations that affect their attendance or their preparation. Students with **more than seven** absences should expect an **automatic F** in the course.
- Every assignment must be turned in **typed, printed on clean papers, and stapled**, and they must be submitted **on time**. **No** late submissions are accepted.
- **No make-up test** will be administered.
- Most announcements will be made in class but there may be some important announcements and notices made **via e-mail**. So please **check e-mail every day** and stay updated on any notices or changes made about the course.

### Academic Integrity

This course follows the University's statement on academic integrity as in p. 82 of the *Bulletin of Texas Tech*: "It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of **complete honesty** and a **high standard of integrity**. The attempt of students to present as their own work that they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a **serious offense** and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension."

**In other words, cheating and plagiarism will NOT be tolerated in this class.**

- **What counts as cheating:** Dishonesty on examinations and quizzes or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination or quiz, obtaining information during an examination from the examination paper or otherwise from another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry to or unauthorized presence in an office are instances of cheating.
- **What counts as plagiarism:** Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore any student who fails to give credit for quotations or an essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines, and other reference works, or from the themes, reports, or other writings of a fellow student or any other person, is guilty of plagiarism.

### Civility in the Classroom

Appropriate student behavior (whether online, in person, or over the telephone) creates a better environment for learning and teaching. Therefore, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is **conducive to learning**. **NO** behavior that will cause distraction or discomfort will be allowed such as talking to someone in class unless it's allowed by me or responding rudely to someone's remarks or questions. **Inappropriate behavior** in the classroom shall result, minimally, **in a request to leave class**.

**Repercussions:** Failure to uphold the Code of Student Conduct as laid out in the Student Affairs Handbook (<http://www.studentaffairs.ttu.edu/campuslife/handbook.pdf>), in particular, with respect to academic honesty and appropriate behavior, may result in one or more of these penalties, depending on the instructor's assessment of the seriousness of the violation: e.g., a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade for the course, reporting to the Dean of Students, referral for disciplinary action to the Student Mediation Center, or other relevant disciplinary action. Students should remember that **every action has a consequence** and that students bear responsibility for all of their own actions.

### Student with Disabilities

Any student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from AccessTECH. No requirement exists that accommodations be made prior to completion of this approved university procedure.