

Sookmyung Women's University
Department of TESOL
Introduction to Linguistics
Policy
Fall 2026

Overview: As language teachers we often deal with language almost exclusively on the surface level. This also includes not only basic descriptions but also more formal descriptions of linguistic behavior such as structural phenomenon, meaning and, crucially, use. Yet there is a wide range of theories that postulate linguistic systems working below the surface and these systems work to explain and/or constrain what is possible in language. Crucially, such systems can also explain not only how linguistic systems develop and change through use but also can help explain the choices that speakers make in using certain structures. It, therefore, seems that as professionals working in the field of linguistic development, we need to look below the surface to see what kind of system(s) language is really composed of. This face-to face course, therefore, is designed to provide students with instruction in the underlying psychological system(s) of language and English in particular from the theoretical perspective of what is generally referred to as cognitive linguistics. We explore together how this pivotal body of knowledge can be of benefit to English language teachers in the classroom and beyond.

Objectives: This main objective of this course is to help the students/teachers to better understand the nature of language itself by looking at how language is supposed to work from a cognitive linguistic or usage-based perspective. Basically, students should leave this course with a sound but basic comprehension of how language works as viewed by the cognitive linguistic theoretical model. In addition to this, the course will be geared toward how all this knowledge can be used by working teachers of language. In short, the second goal of this course is to answer the question all teachers who study linguistics need to ask themselves; how can I use this in the way I teach? It is intended that this class, at the very least, will affect teachers' beliefs about how language works and, at best, will provide specific ideas that can be used in the language classroom.

Texts and Materials

Main Texts

For this course we are going to use three main texts. While three books might seem excessive, each one is different in its goals and the approach it takes to meet those goals. Alone, no one of these is sufficient in providing a general picture of how language works. Taken together, though, they provide a complete and comprehensive treatment of language from this perspective. These are the three main texts:

Bybee, J. (2010). *Language, usage and cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This book provides an introduction to the usage-based model of language and includes many different examples of how this model can be used to explain common linguistic phenomenon.

Dirven, R. and Verspoor, M. (2004). *Cognitive exploration of language and linguistics* (2nd Edition). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

This book provides a very general overview of how cognitive linguistics works within the different areas of traditional linguistic concern, i.e., phonology, etc.

Lee, D. (2001) *Cognitive linguistics: An introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book introduces some of the major theoretical underpinnings of cognitive linguistic theory and then, looking at individual linguistic phenomenon in English, provides examples of how the theory works to explain linguistic phenomenon.

Additional Materials: There will be two additional texts used in this course. We will be including Evans and Green quite a bit but for the most part it will be used as an additional or supplemental text

-Evans, V. and Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: An introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

-Hudson, R. (2007). *Word grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Methodology

Language Policy: Following the international model upon which this TESOL MA rests, students are expected to produce all course work in English. This means all writing assignments must be in English. Linguistic behavior in the classroom should be conducted in a way that is non-exclusionary. Language use should be used appropriately as a means of enhancing and integrating understanding of the course content, not as a way of avoiding other languages or individuals.

Classroom: This course is to be conducted as a blended learning class and to do so effectively we will be using several different on-line tools in the running of the course. In general, the course will be managed using the Sookmyung Snowboard system. All sorts of support materials will be loaded up into Snowboard including class videos, summaries and assignments. Additionally, we will be meeting together each week in our classroom where we will be discussing the readings and videos for the week as well as doing some practice activities together.

In the class there will be more discussion-oriented and interactive activities. Students will be expected to demonstrate that they have done the reading and learned something by taking an active role in the class discussions. There are no clear-cut answers to any of these concerns. The students need to come up with their own ideas and develop further questions. In order to do this, students need to be prepared. I will be posting things up far in advance so students can peruse the materials at their convenience with the intended goal of being able to perform well in the class meeting sessions.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. Two or more absences will result in a significantly lowered final grade. Being late twice is counted as an absence. Arriving more than half an hour late is also counted as an absence. Students themselves are responsible for all material covered and assigned in class during their absence. If you are going to be absent and know it beforehand, make sure you contact me as far in advance as possible.

Assignments

Homework: Students will be given homework on a regular basis. The homework will usually come in the form of exercises from both the assigned reading texts and outside sources as well as questions based on the reading which the students are expected to answer. All assignments will be posted into Snowboard and students can put their assignments right there into the Snowboard system for feedback and evaluation.

Projects

Midterm Project: The midterm project is due on the 9th week of class (November 2nd). It will be a project and there will be several different options which students can choose from. Specific information about each of the options will be released after the course has begun.

Final Project: The final project will be a revision and further development of the Midterm Project. It is due on December 19th.

Grades: Final grades will be based on performance in the following categories.

Assignments	35%
Participation	25%
Midterm Project	10%
Final Project	30%

Important Notes

- Late assignments will not be accepted for marks and missed in class work cannot be made up. If, however, you know in advance that you will be late or absent make sure you contact the teacher and maybe something can be worked out.
- The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is automatic failure. Don't try it.

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