

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

Week 1; September 7

Introductions

Introductions to the course, to the materials, instructor, assignments, and everything else.

This week we look at the study of language and the different ways that one can look at language. We do this by reviewing the approach taken in Evans (2017) as contrasting with the, as yet, still dominant generative approach and that will complete our discussion of generative linguistics in this course.

Homework: Read Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 1, Lee (2001), Chapter 1 and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 2.

Week 2; September 14

Basic Concepts

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 1 – The cognitive basis of language - Language and thought

Lee (2001), Chapter 1 – Basic concepts

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 2 – The nature of cognitive linguistics: Assumptions and commitments

This week we delve into the world of cognitive linguistics. We review some of the basic terms and concepts in the field by look at three different introductory chapters from three of our main texts. This gives us a basic idea of some of the basic cognitive tools and principles that are used in the production of language from the cognitive linguistic point of view.

Homework: Read Bybee (2010) Chapter 1 and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 4.

Week 3; September 21

Usage-based Models

Bybee (2010), Chapter 1 – A usage-based perspective on language

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 4 – Language in use: Knowledge of language, language change and language acquisition

This week we take a look at how usage-based systems are reported to work. The usage-based framework provides a theoretical pillar for the larger cognitive approach and, as such, needs to be well understood.

Homework: Read Bybee (2007), Chapter 2 and Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 5.

Week 4; September 28

Sounds and Exemplars

Bybee (2007), Chapter 2 – Rich memory for language: Exemplar theory

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 5 – The sounds of language: Phonetics and phonology

This week we look at the how language preserves and uses forms. This is a very important underlying concept in language and we will see how it applies specifically to the area of sound (phonetics). Phonetics is a good place to start with this because sounds are the most basic (and possibly the most concrete) types of forms in language.

Homework: Read Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 6.

Week 5; October 5 (Holiday – class to be rescheduled)

Introducing Words

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 2 – What's in a word: Lexicology

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 7 – The encyclopedic view of meaning

This week we start our look at the world of words from a cognitive perspective. We explore some basic ideas about where word meaning comes from and how these meanings interact with the world around us. By looking at lexis we can get a good feel for how cognitive linguistics works.

Homework: Read Hudson (2007), Chapter 5

Week 6; October 12

Word Meaning

Hudson (2007), Chapter 5 – Meaning; Semantics and sociolinguistics

We extend our investigation into word meaning by looking at the interaction between word meaning and word use as espoused in Hudson (2007). This extends the ideas presented in the previous week further and forms a nice link into the idea of building words, which will be addressed in the following week.

Homework: Read Bybee (2007), Chapter 3, Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 3.

Week 7; October 19

Building Words

Bybee (2007), Chapter 3 – Chunking and degrees of autonomy

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 3 – Meaningful building blocks: Morphology

This week we look at the linguistic behavior of words. Essentially, we are looking at the way that the forms of words are able to change. We explore the how and why of language change in at the word level.

Homework: Catch up and work on your midterm report!

Week 8; October 26

Reading Week

This week we take some necessary time to work on our midterm projects.

Homework: Read Lee (2001), Chapters 2 and 3 and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 3.

Week 9; November 2

Space and Spatial Meaning

Lee (2001), Chapter 2 - Space

Lee (2001), Chapter 3 – Extensions from spatial meanings

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 3 – Universals and variations in language thought and experience

This week we look at the idea of space. This is an important idea in cognitive approaches to language and illustrates the connection between learning, usage and form. Space is tied strongly to the idea of embodiment, which is a power explanatory theory of language learning.

Homework: Read Bybee (2007), Chapter 5 and Lee (2001), Chapter 4.

Week 10; November 9

Categorization

Bybee (2007), Chapter 5 – Categorization and the distribution of constructions in corpora

Lee (2001), Chapter 4 – Radial categories

This week we look at the very important idea of categorization. This is an important idea for this theory of language because it is the different component parts of the categories that connect the different parts and also allow change to ensue.

Homework: Read Bybee (2007), Chapter 6, Lee (2001), Chapter 5 and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 19.

Week 11; November 16

Constructions

Bybee (2007), Chapter 6 – Where do constructions come from? Synchrony and diachrony in usage-based theory

Lee (2001), Chapter 5 – Constructions

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 19 – Motivating a construction approach to grammar

This week we look at the important idea of constructions from two different viewpoints. Constructions are central to the idea of syntax from the cognitive viewpoint and is something that we will be coming back to when we start looking at syntactic processes in more detail.

Homework: Read Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 4 and Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 14.

Week 12; November 23

Syntax

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 4 – Putting concepts together: Syntax

Evans & Green (2006), Chapter 14 – What is a cognitive approach to grammar?

We look at syntax this week from the general cognitive linguistic viewpoint. We discuss schemas, among other things, as an important way of analyzing sentences from this point of view.

Homework: Read Lee (2001), Chapters 8, 9, and 10.

Week 13; November 30

Syntax Examples

Lee (2001), Chapter 8 - Count and mass nouns

Lee (2001), Chapter 9 - Perfective and imperfective use of verbs

Lee (2001), Chapter 10 – Causation and agency

This week we look at some specific examples of how the cognitive linguistic approach can be applied to specific syntactic phenomenon. These are often viewed as problem areas in the study/learning of English grammar. The explanations offered here are both useful and simpler than ones often employed.

Homework: Read Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 7 and Lee (2001), Chapter 13.

Week 14; December 7

Pragmatics

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 7 – Doing things with words: Pragmatics

Lee (2001), Chapter 13 – Creativity and the nature of meaning

This week we look at how language is used in the social setting. In effect we look at the different choices that people make about the structures they wish to employ and the variation that such choices lead to from a cognitive perspective.

Homework: Read Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapters 9 and 10.

Week 15; December 14

Language Change and Comparison

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 9 – Language across time: Historical linguistics

Dirven & Verspoor (2004), Chapter 10 – Comparing languages, language classification, typology, and cognitive linguistics

In our final week of the course, we turn our attention to the very interesting questions of language change. Then we look at the way we might compare languages from a cognitive linguistic viewpoint.

Homework: You must be kidding!!

Final Project: The final project is due at the symposium on December 19.