COURSE SYLLABUS  
ESU 561  
ASPECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
Fall 2014

EDU 561   (85515)  
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a practical course for the prospective, continuing, or content area ESOL teacher which will examine the various linguistic elements of the English language and their relevance to the teaching process of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). We will be focusing on analyzing the grammatical and phonological aspects of the English language as well as looking at morphology and lexis, semantics, and theories of second language acquisition. Primary emphasis will be placed on a better understanding of English through online discussion, powerpoint presentations, and practical application for teaching in the ESOL classroom or classrooms with some English Language Learners (ELL’s).

GOAL:

One of the major focuses of this course is to examine in depth the characteristics of English grammar and phonology to promote a better understanding of how and why we say what we say in English. As a result, teachers will emerge with a better grasp of the principles of phonetics, syntax, morphology, and semantics and be better able to apply these principles relevantly and practically. Another equally important goal is to explore and examine the various theories of how languages are learned most effectively through readings and discussions on second language acquisition (SLA). While a holistic approach to teaching ESOL is very much encouraged, it is also important for the teacher of English to know the language thoroughly enough to be able to answer - either inductively or deductively - difficult grammatical questions posed by an English language learner (ELL). Teachers will also need to learn how to empower their ELL’s to take more personal responsibility in monitoring their language in order to produce intelligible English.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To be able to read and write the English phonemic transcription system

2. To analyze and correct errors in English pronunciation (segmentals and suprasegmentals)

3. To understand basic theories of how language is learned

4. To apply grammatical rules to practical, relevant and communicative teaching situations
5. To analyze and correct syntactical errors in speech
6. To understand the basic concepts of derivational and inflectional morphology
7. To understand variations in language style and register
8. To enjoy learning about the English language through sharing experiences and discussions

**REQUIRED COURSE BOOKS:**


**Suggested Texts:**


Swan, Michael. *Practical English Usage.* Oxford University Pr. 1980


**EVALUATION:**

1. Preparation and participation in group discussions 25 %
2. Project 1 - profile of learner's English proficiency 40 %
3. Project 2 - analysis of grammatical structure 20 %
4. Final Examination - take home (includes LSR) 15%

100 %

**EXPECTATIONS:**

1. Participate actively in online discussions (see rubric and comments)
2. Ask questions when confused
3. Complete the two projects assigned.
4. Complete Take-home Final Exam (including LSR)
PROJECT 1: L2 LEARNER LINGUISTIC PROFILE

Conduct an extensive audio-recorded interview with a non-native speaker of English with a view to analyzing the language from a phonetic, morphological, syntactic and semantic perspective of the speaker's spoken language. If at all possible, try to obtain a writing sample from the interviewee that can be used as a part of the analysis. I have placed examples of former papers on E-reserve so that you can get a better idea of what is expected. It is very important to read one or two of these papers carefully so that you can get an idea of what I am looking for.

The analysis should contain the following details:

1. **Phonetic** - a short phonemic transcription (15-20 lines) taken from the interview which should contain important phonetic errors or differences. The transcription must be written with the symbols used in *Teaching American English Pronunciation* (Avery and Ehrlich) and according to the speech pattern of the interviewee, showing through the transcription their errors in contrast with what is "acceptable" pronunciation. You can use the following website for your phonemic transcriptions: [www.typeit.org](http://www.typeit.org) Supra-segmental errors (word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and linking) also need to be analyzed. It is also important to include teaching techniques and remedies which could be used to help correct these speech patterns.

2. **Syntactical** - an analysis of the use of English grammatical structure. Analyze grammatical errors and incorrect sentence patterns and decide why they are wrong and what was intended, paying special attention to choice of tenses. Since spoken language tends to be much less formal and much more limited in the use of a variety of structures, most of the errors will revolve around verb tenses and aspect (simple vs. progressive). Sentence structure errors are more easily seen on the writing sample. Other grammatical errors that you should look for are: article use, use of gerund and infinitive, modal verbs, direct and indirect questions, passive voice, and prepositions. It is important to assess how much L1 interferes with their English usage and to determine to what extent they really understand the meaning of any grammatical item. Offer some suggestions on how some of these major errors can be addressed.

3. **Morphological** - a description of the interviewee's use of word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc) and morphemes (derivational and inflectional). Attention should be given to omissions, additions, and patterns of usage, doing your best to state what some of the characteristics of the speaker's native language are which might interfere with intelligible English. Basically, are the speakers/writers using the correct form of the word (derivational) or are the endings on verbs (s, ed, ing) in order?

4. **Semantic** - an analysis, if applicable, of how the speaker uses words, phrases, and sentences to convey the message and identify the irregularities. Try to provide the intended word, phrase, or sentence and why they used what they did, either in terms of native language interference or in terms of overuse or misuse of connotative meaning.
Suggestions for the interview: You will need to record the interview in the first two or three weeks so that you can more easily focus on the content for further analysis without the interviewee being present. It is by far more instructional to choose a speaker at a higher level (Intermediate +) with whom you can engage in a more open-ended discussion (15+ years old). The variety of structures and range of errors will be broader and more relevant to what we are doing during the course. Your interview must be long enough to be able to focus on each of the above areas, and your paper must be fortified with specific examples. I would also like you to have the subject produce some written English to compare with oral output, which will help to show points of syntactical and morphological weakness.

Format of Paper: This really depends on how much information can be gathered to support your analysis. It should be around 10-15 pages, typed and double spaced. Your transcription, which is only a selected passage, needs to be typed (www.typeit.org) with a typed translation above it (12-14 font). An introductory paragraph should describe the non-native speaker’s age, educational background, linguistic background, country of origin, past English language learning experience, a rough estimate of the level of proficiency and his/her motivation for learning English. You might want to include mention of any cultural or psychological (boredom, loneliness, frustration with progress) problems which may impede language acquisition. You should conclude with a summary of your linguistic assessment.

NOTE: Sample papers from previous students are on e-reserve at the USM Portland Library.

PROJECT 2: GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

All of you need to know from the reading what the grammatical structures are in English and what the difficulties are for learners. However, in order to go into more depth, I would like to assign pairs or singles from the class to research some of these structures. Using as many sources as possible – my handouts on grammar in the Weekly Units, information available from Keys to Teaching Grammar, internet sites, or books on reserve - analyze thoroughly a specific grammatical structure (to be determined) which will be presented online through power point (most preferred) or by a handout of not more than four pages (least preferred). These will be posted on the Discussion Board Thread under the Grammar Projects forum. Each structure will be assigned to you during the fourth week of the course so that you will know in advance. You will be the expert on the structure and be able to answer questions from the others in the class. The following aspects should be included:

1. Explanation of a Grammatical Item: You will need to be able and to understand thoroughly the rules and conditions for this item and how it is used correctly in English, pointing out problem areas (formation, understanding semantic meaning, pragmatics, pronunciation, etc.) for ESL/EFL students and irregularities that might be problematic. If necessary, explain how the structure may differ when produced in a spoken versus a written context. Also, are there any specific problems which would make this structure confusing to L2 learners due to L1 interference?

2. How to Teach the Structure: Based on a variety of sources and on your own experience, give some suggestions and examples of different ways you could teach this structure effectively and inductively in a classroom situation. Try to devise a way in which you can PRESENT, PRACTICE, and PRODUCE a situation where the students - our class - can best understand the grammatical form.
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or contact the Office of Support for Students with Disabilities, 242 Luther Bonney (780-4706). Help is also available through the Counseling Center, 106 Payson Smith (780-4050).

USM Email Communication Policy
In order to meet the academic and administrative needs of the University community, USM has established email as an official and primary means of communication to all of its students. In some cases, email may be the only form of communication. Official University assigned email accounts are created for all accepted and/or enrolled students usually in the form of FirstName.LastName@maine.edu. Students are responsible to read all information sent to them via their University assigned email account. Students should activate their assigned email accounts at https://mail.maine.edu. The email communication policy can be found online: http://usm.maine.edu/doit

Conceptual Framework for Preparing Educators and Human Development Professionals for Responsible and Ethical Service

Mission

We seek to foster respectful and collaborative learning communities, well-informed decision-making, valid reasoning, and a concern for equity and social justice in the fields of education and human development.

Core Values

We share the following commitments:

- Democracy – to enact and elicit inclusive dialogue, freedom of expression, and participatory decision-making that includes respect for and consideration of multiple views and perspectives.

- Civility and caring – to attend to the health of our learning and working communities through maintaining constructive communication, protecting individual dignity, and exhibiting empathy, compassion, and openness.

- Equity and Diversity – to seek understanding about, engage inclusively with, and foster the voice and visibility of individuals of all identity groups and perspectives.

- Social Justice – to speak for and empower people who are disenfranchised and work towards a more just society.

- Ethical practice – to engage in and insist on the highest level of professional practice.

- Scholarship – to gain, create, teach, and apply knowledge and skills using methods of research and inquiry that reflect the diverse range of accepted practices within our various academic and professional disciplines.

- Professional Learning and Continuous Improvement – to engage ourselves and our various external partners as learners in our respective fields, use formative feedback, and adjust our practices for mutual and continuing professional growth.
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Articles  KTG: pp 138-160; 179-184  Oct. 20-25
Inversions  WB: 132-140; 151-154
The Future  HLL Chapter 4

Week 9
Inversions/Gerunds  KTG: pp 201-209; 263-276  Oct 27-Nov.1
Participles  WB: 166-170
Sample Transcriptions Due

Week 10
Language in Society  KTG: pp 277-286; 287-296  Nov. 3-8
Passive Voice  WB: 187-194
HLL Chapter 5

Week 11
Prepositions  KTG: pp 161-178; 210-223  Nov. 10-15
Phrasal Verbs  WB: 141-150, 171-175

Week 12
Reported Speech  KTG: pp 252-262  Nov. 17-22
Conditions/Wishes  WB: 195-200
HLL Chapter 6

Week 13
Adjective Clauses  KTG: 193-200; 297-348  Dec. 1-6
Adverbs/Adverbial Clauses  WB: 162-165
HLL Chapter 7

LINGUISTIC PROFILES DUE

Week 14
Final Examination (at home)  Dec. 8-12