TESL 503  The Structure of English
Professor N.S. Baron
Spring 2011
Thursdays 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

OFFICE HOURS
Location:   McKinley 156
Times:      Tuesdays  3:15 pm – 5:15 pm
            Thursdays  3:15 pm – 5:15 pm
Phone:
email: nbaron at american.edu

READING
Required:

Highly Recommended:

Besides the textbooks (available at the Campus Store), some additional materials are posted under “Readings” on our Blackboard site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
(1) Exam I (30 points)
(2) Exam II (30 points)
(3) Portfolio (35 points)
(4) Discussion Board Postings and Class Participation (5)
   Please post to at least three (3) of the 5 reflective DBs
   NOTES: (a) DB1 (“By Way of Introduction”) does NOT count towards the three.
   (b) EVERYONE posts to DB6 (can be counted as one of the three)

COURSE POLICIES
All course work is subject to the standards and procedures of the University Academic Integrity Code. All work must be one's own unless appropriate collaboration has been approved in advance.

From time to time, I will use the email function of Blackboard to communicate with you. Email will automatically be sent to your AU email address. However, you can select to have your AU email forwarded to any email address you choose (see the “Technology” section of my.american.edu). PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOU ARE RECEIVING EMAIL FROM YOUR AU EMAIL ADDRESS.
NOTES:
(1) Reading Assignments:
Should be completed in time for the class date for which they are listed.

(2) Homework Assignments:
Nearly all of the homework exercises are from the chapters in Analyzing English Grammar. PLEASE TRY TO DO ALL THE EXERCISES. Copies of the answer key are on reserve in the library. We will review in class any questions you have. Also consult Crystal’s Encyclopedia and Hurford’s Grammar (see next page) as general resources.

(3) Grammars of English, Linguistic Encyclopedias
For our course in general (as well as particularly for Part II of the Portfolio), I have identified a set of grammar books and linguistic encyclopedias that you should find helpful. Some are new books; others are older classics. All books are available through Bender Library. They are located either in the regular stacks, Reference stacks, Reserves, or online. The older “grammar classics” are in the regular stacks. Please use these “classics” in the library. DO NOT CHECK THEM OUT and RETURN THEM TO THE SHELVES WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WITH THEM so the books will be available to your classmates.

In addition, you will find David Crystal’s Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language in the Reference stacks, should you choose not to purchase it.

NOTE TO DCPS TEACHERS, GEORGETOWN U STUDENTS ON CLASS DATES:
This course will meet according to American University’s class schedule (and Spring Break schedule), which may not be the same as for DCPS or Georgetown. I anticipate seeing you in class when AU is in session.

SEMESTER OVERVIEW:
1. Jan 13 Course Overview; Introduction to English Grammar; Video: “The Adventure of English”
2. Jan 20 English Sound System; English Writing System
3. Jan 27 English Writing System (cont); Writing Online
4. Feb 3 Prescriptivism/Descriptivism; Varieties of English
5. Feb 10 PART I OF PORTFOLIO DUE; Morphology; Form-Class Words
6. Feb 17 Structure-Class Words; Affix-Hopping
7. Feb 24 Phrases
8. Mar 3 EXAM I; Discuss Portfolio Part II and Part III
9. Mar 10 NO CLASS (Spring Break)
March 17 Meetings with Professor Baron to discuss Part III of Portfolio
10. Mar 17 TOPIC, TEAM MEMBERS FOR PART III OF PORTFOLIO DUE; Review Exam I;
    5 Basic Sentence Types; Basic Sentence Transformations
    Video: “The Future of Englishes”
12. Apr 7 PART II OF PORTFOLIO DUE; Finite Verb Clauses: Adverbial and Adjectival
13. Apr 14 Finite Verb Clauses: Nominal
14. Apr 21 Non-Referential It and There; Nonfinite Verb Phrases; Course Evaluations
15. Apr 28 PART III OF PORTFOLIO DUE; Present Final Projects
16. May 5 EXAM II
Grammars and Encyclopedias Available in Bender Library

Note: Reference stacks are on the 1st floor (entry level). Reserves are on the lower level.

**General Linguistic Encyclopedias**


**Modern Grammars**


**Grammar Classics**


**Usage Classic**


**Crystal Encyclopedia of English**


**Basic English Grammar Book**


**ADDITIONAL BOOKS OF INTEREST**


SYLLABUS DETAILS

1. Thursday, January 13
   TOPIC: Overview
   Introduction to English Grammar

2. Thursday, January 20
   TOPIC: English Sound System; English Writing System
   BLACKBOARD:
   Do postings to Discussion Board
   DB 1: By Way of Introduction
   DB 2: Why English Writing is Problematic
   NOTE: Discussion Boards are a tab on our class Blackboard site.
   Please post by **7:00 pm on Wednesday, January 19**. To do a posting,
   (1) Click on Forum 1 (“By Way of Introduction”).
   (2) Click on the most recent message (listed on left).
   (3) Click “Reply” (lower right hand corner).
   (4) Post your own entry.
   (5) Repeat for Forum 2 (“Why English Writing is Problematic”)
   READING:
   AG [= *Analyzing English Grammar*]
   Appendix
   Cook [= *The English Writing System*]
   Chapters 1-4
   Encyc [= *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*]
   NOTE: Throughout the semester, readings from Crystal are optional, but
   **strongly** recommended.
   Chapters 17 and 18
   Baron, “The Written Turn” [Blackboard Readings]
   HOMEWORK:
   AG: Exercises in Appendix

3. Thursday, January 27
   TOPIC: English Writing System (cont); Writing Online
   BLACKBOARD
   Do posting to Discussion Board 3: Does Punctuation Matter?
   Please post by **7:00 pm on Wednesday, January 26**
   READING:
   Cook: Chapters 5-7
   [Blackboard Readings]
   Reuters, BBC news stories on punctuation (hyphens, apostrophes) [Available on Blackboard Readings]
   Plester and Wood, “Exploring Relationships between Traditional and New Media Literacies: British Preteen Texters at School” [Blackboard Readings]
4. Thursday, February 3
TOPIC: Prescriptivism/Descriptivism; Varieties of English
READING:
Nunberg, “The Decline of Grammar” [Blackboard Readings]
Baron, Chapter 8 of Always On, “‘Whatever’: Is the Internet Destroying Language?” [Available on Blackboard Readings]
AG: Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (Varieties of English)
Encyc: Chapters 13, 19, 20, and 21
HOMEWORK:
AG: Exercises in Chapters 1 and 2

5. Thursday, February 10
PART I OF PORTFOLIO DUE
TOPIC: Morphology; Form-Class Words
READING:
Cohen, “In 500 Billion Words, New Window on Culture” [Blackboard Readings]
Cave, “Scalito” [Blackboard Readings]
AG: Chapter 3 (Morphology), Chapter 4 (Form-Class Words)
Encyc: Chapters 14 and 15
HOMEWORK:
AG: Exercises in Chapters 3 and 4

6. Thursday, February 17
TOPIC: Structure-Class Words; Affix-Hopping
BLACKBOARD:
Do posting to Discussion Board 4: Hard to Teach / Hard to Learn
Please post by 7:00 pm on Wednesday, February 16
READING:
AG: Chapters 5 and 6 (Structure-Class Words)
HOMEWORK:
AG: Exercises in Chapters 5 and 6

7. Thursday, February 24
TOPIC: Phrases
BLACKBOARD:
Do posting to Discussion Board 5: Modals Can and May
Please post by 7:00 pm on Wednesday, February 23
READING:
AG: Chapter 7 (Phrases)
Encyc: Chapter 16
HOMEWORK:
Affix Hopping: Eve and her apple
AG: Exercises in Chapter 7
8. Thursday, March 3
EXAM I
  Covers:  Video ("The Adventure of English")
  *The English Writing System* (complete) + related reading
  Punctuation; Writing online
  Prescriptivism/descriptivism
  *Analyzing English Grammar*, Chapters 1-7

TOPIC:  Discuss Portfolio Part II and Part III
Schedule meetings with Professor Baron (on March 17) to discuss Portfolio III

March 10
  NO CLASS (Spring Break)

March 17
  Meetings with Professor Baron to discuss Portfolio III

9. Thursday, March 17
TOPIC, TEAM MEMBERS FOR PART III OF PORTFOLIO DUE
TOPICS:  Review Exam I; Five Basic Sentence Types; Basic Sentence Transformations
READING:
  AG:  Chapter 8 (Five Basic Sentence Types)
        Chapter 9 (Basic Sentence Transformations)
HOMEWORK:
  AG:  Exercises in Chapters 8 and 9

10. Thursday, March 24
TOPIC:  English on the World Stage: World Englishes, Commodification, Style Shift in News
VIDEO:  The Future of Englishes (DVD 6348)
BLACKBOARD:
  You may choose to post either to DB6a or DB6b (though feel free to post to both, if you wish).
  In either case,
    Please post by 7:00 pm on Tuesday, March 29
    [NOTE: Posting is due on a Tuesday, not Wednesday]
  Also, be sure to read the instructions for the questions before doing your posting.

DB6a Commodification of English
  Has English become an economic commodity in the international marketplace? If so, what
  are the pros and cons of this development? (If you do not find that English has become a
  commodity, explain your reasoning.)

  NOTE: In preparation for responding to this question, be sure to read and reflect on Deborah
  Cameron's "The Commodification of Language: English as a Global Commodity"
  [Blackboard Readings]. Please draft your response in a MS Word file (so that it is easy for
  you to read -- and edit) and plan to write about a page worth (c. 250-300 words). Then copy
  the contents of your essay and paste them onto Blackboard Forum 6a.
DB6b Shifts in Level of Formality in Language for Reporting the News

Imagine (spoken) evening newscasts 10 years from now. Drawing upon Jennifer Price's article ("Old News: Rethinking the History of Australian English"), describe the linguistic style that you believe will be used -- and why.

NOTE: Jennifer Price's article is Blackboard Readings. Please draft your response in a MS Word file (so that it is easy for you to read -- and edit) and plan to write about a page worth (c. 250-300 words). Then copy the contents of your essay and past them onto Blackboard Forum 6b.

READING:

NY Times: Not a Snowball

11. Thursday, March 31
PART II OF PORTFOLIO DUE
TOPIC: Finite Verb Clauses: Adverbial and Adjectival
READING:
AG:  Chapter 10 (Finite Verb Clauses: Adverbial and Adjectival)
HOMEWORK:
AG:  Exercises in Chapter 10

12. Thursday, April 7
TOPIC: Finite Verb Clauses: Nominal
READING:
AG:  Chapter 11 (Finite Verb Clauses: Nominal)
HOMEWORK:
AG:  Exercises in Chapter 11

13. Thursday, April 14
TOPICS: Non-Referential It and There as Subjects
Nonfinite Verb Phrases
Review for Exam II
(a) distribute either take-home question or possible in-class essay topics
(b) questions on Chapters 7-12, class discussion

READING:
AG:  Chapter 12 (Nonfinite Verb Phrases)
HOMEWORK:
AG:  Exercises in Chapter 12
Course Evaluations
14. Thursday, April 21
PART III OF PORTFOLIO DUE
Present Final Projects
Pot Luck Dinner

15. Thursday, April 28
EXAM II
Covers: Analyzing Grammar, Chapters 7-12; additional readings;
video (“Future of Englishes”)

Grades for all individual assignments will be posted to the “Gradebook” function of Blackboard. Final grades for the course will be posted online through the Registrar’s Office.

You may pick up your Portfolio III and Exam II in McKinley 156, beginning Tuesday, May 3.