

LING3002: The Design of Language

Callaghan

Semester 1 - 2025



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description

This course focuses on the foundations of language structure - the underlying principles of grammar that form the innate structure of language in the human mind. We look at the way these universal principles are applied by speakers to build phrases, clauses and sentences across diverse languages, and at the functional relationship between parts of phrases and clauses, such as subject and object. We attempt to understand these phenomena through the lens of Minimalism, the dominant theory of syntax. The course concentrates on basic concepts and methods of syntactic analysis, and focuses on the practical analysis and description of a wide range of phenomena from a variety of languages.

Academic Progress Requirements

Nil

Assumed Knowledge

10 units in linguistics at 1000 level

Contact Hours

**Callaghan
Lecture**

Face to Face On Campus

2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

Unit Weighting

10

Workload

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	Callaghan Prof Bill Palmer Bill.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au (02) 4921 5157 Consultation: Consultations available via email.
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences Social Sciences Building Callaghan HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	<p>This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and methods of syntactic analysis. It concentrates on practical analysis and description of a wide range of phenomena from a variety of languages. Topics covered will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Word classes and phrasal categories2. Word order and clause structure3. Major clause types, including statements, questions and commands, and clauses with non-verbal predicates4. Multi-clausal constructions, including complement clauses and relative clauses5. The principles of argument structure6. Grammatical functions such as subject and object, including the interaction of syntax and morphology7. Semantic functions such as agent and patient, including the interaction of syntax and semantics8. Intermediate levels of structure, including X-bar syntax9. Principles of Minimalist syntax10. Third Factors, and cognitivist vs nativist views of language in the mind
Course Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Apply analytic methods to analyse syntactic data.2. Identify syntactic units such as heads, complements, adjuncts, and arguments.3. Demonstrate an understanding of the structural characteristics of phrases and clauses.4. Describe syntactic structures and relations in a formal way.5. Characterize syntactic diversity across languages.
Course Materials	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Kroeger, Paul. 2005. <i>Analyzing grammar: an introduction</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>van Gelderen, Elly. 2017. <i>Syntax: An Introduction to Minimalism</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Both of these books are available online through the library catalogue.</p> <p>Further details on course materials can be found on the course Canvas website.</p>

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	24 Feb	What is syntax?	van Gelderen ch 1	
2	3 Mar	Argument structure	Kroeger chapter 4	
3	10 Mar	Heads and complements	Kroeger chapter 5	
4	17 Mar	Coding Grammatical Relations	Kroeger chapter 7	Assig 1 (argument structure) due 11pm Sunday 23/3/2025
5	24 Mar	Manipulating valency	Kroeger chapter 14	
6	31 Mar	Phrases and intermediate levels of structure	van Gelderen chs 2-3	Assig 2 (argument coding) due 11pm Sunday 6/4/2025
7	7 Apr	X-Bar syntax	van Gelderen ch 7	
Recess				
Recess				
8	28 Apr	Functional heads and the Verb Phrase	van Gelderen ch 4	
9	5 May	Clauses and the Tense Phrase	van Gelderen ch 5	Assig 3 (X-Bar and functional heads) due 11pm Sunday 11/5/2025
10	12 May	Subordination and the Complementizer Phrase	van Gelderen ch 6	
11	19 May	Interrogative clauses and focus	van Gelderen ch 6 (cont.)	Assig 4 (CP and subordination) due 11pm Sunday 25/5/2025
12	26 May	Third Factors; course overview	van Gelderen ch 9	
13	2 Jun	No classes		
Exams				Essay due 11pm Sunday 15/6/2025
Exams				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 2 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Part 1 - Take Home Assignments (x4)	Assignment 1: (argument structure) due 11pm Sunday 23/3/2025. Assignment 2: (argument coding) due 11pm Sunday 6/4/2025. Assignment 3: (X-Bar & functional heads) due 11pm Sunday 11/5/2025. Assignment 4: (CP & subordination) due 11pm Sunday 25/5/2025.	Individual	60% (4x15%)	3, 5
2	Part 2 - Essay	Essay: due 11pm Sunday 15/6/2025.	Individual	40%	1, 2, 3, 4

Late Submissions The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Part 1 - Take Home Assignments (x4)

Assessment Type Written Assignment
Description In these assignments you will apply the analytic procedures discussed in the course to specific sets of data. Each assignment will test this in relation to a specific area of the course content, as described below.
Weighting 60% (4x15%)
Length Each assignment is equivalent to 500 words (+/-10%)
Due Date Assignment 1: (argument structure) due 11pm Sunday 23/3/2025.
 Assignment 2: (argument coding) due 11pm Sunday 6/4/2025.
 Assignment 3: (X-Bar and functional heads) due 11pm Sunday 11/5/2025.
 Assignment 4: (CP and subordination) due 11pm Sunday 25/5/2025.
Submission Method Online
Assessment Criteria See Canvas site for more information
Return Method Online
Feedback Provided Online
Opportunity to Reattempt Students will not be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment.

Assessment 2 - Part 2 - Essay

Assessment Type Essay
Description In this essay you will apply the theoretical approaches discussed in the course to a specific theoretical issue, or to a specific aspect of the grammar of a language. You will draw on the literature on the issue at stake, or the aspect of grammar being analysed.
Weighting 40%
Length 2500 words (+/-10%)
Due Date 11pm Sunday 25/6/2025.
Submission Method Online
Assessment Criteria See Canvas site for more information
Return Method Online
Feedback Provided Online

Opportunity to Reattempt

Students will not be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Learning Analytics

The University uses an evidence-based approach to enhancing student learning and delivering support. Our careful analysis of data through learning analytics informs decision making processes related to student learning, academic outcomes, and support services. Learning analytics may be used to identify targeted individual opportunities for additional support services or interventions.

Interviews on Assessment Items

An Interview may be conducted on any assessment item in this course, in accordance with the [Interview on Assessment Items Procedure](#). The purpose of the interview is to verify the author of the material submitted in response to the assessment task and provide a quality assurance measure.

In the event the Course Coordinator is not satisfied that a student's oral responses are consistent with the work originally submitted, the matter will be referred to the Student Academic Conduct Officer, who will take appropriate action under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Integrity

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University.

**and Ethical Academic
Conduct Policy**

These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations.

Please refer to the [Academic Integrity and Ethical Academic Conduct Policy](#)

**Adverse
Circumstances**

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s).

Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the [Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure](#).

**Use of generative
artificial intelligence in
course assessments**

It is critical that any work submitted for assessment is your own original work. Before using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, Microsoft Copilot, etc) in any assessable work you must ensure that such use is in line with the requirements for the course and expectations of your Course Coordinator

Misuse of AI tools may be considered a breach of the [University's Student Conduct Rule](#) and could result in disciplinary action.

Artificial Intelligence detection software may be used to review any work you submit. If you have used AI in any way other than has been expressly permitted by your course coordinator, you may be engaging in academic misconduct and be subject to penalties.

For information, refer to:

- [Generative AI Tools](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)

**Important Policy
Information**

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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