LING2218

Grammar and Meaning

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

Department of Linguistics

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Annabelle Lukin
annabelle.lukin@mq.edu.au

Felicity Cox
felicity.cox@mq.edu.au

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
10cp from LING units at 1000 level

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
Grammar is the powerhouse of language. This unit will introduce you to the relationship of grammar and meaning, through understanding the three functions of language:
the experiential function (how we use language to construe our experience of the world around us, and the world inside us); the interpersonal function (how we enact our social relationships through language); and the textual function (how we organise our language into coherent text). The lexicogrammatical analysis you will learn about in this unit can be applied directly to the texts that you create and consume on a daily basis. The framework you learn in this unit is also applied in many different fields of study, including computational linguistics, translation, literary studies, child language development, political and media discourse, the language of health professionals, the language of education, etc. This is a unit for people who love language, and who understand that language is important to all aspects of life.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Differentiate the three functions of language: the experiential function (language construing experience), the interpersonal function (language enacting interpersonal

relations), and the textual function (language creating coherent text)

ULO2: Apply grammatical concepts to the study of naturally occurring text

ULO3: Analyse grammatical patterning in naturally occurring text

ULO4: Appraise the effects of the grammatical patterning in text in relation to the nature of the social and cultural context of the text

General Assessment Information

Assignment submission

Assignments are due by 11.55pm on the due dates via the Turnitin links.

If you have any concerns about your assignment, please contact me directly so I can support you.

Collaboration

You are free to discuss the assignments with other students. However, you MUST submit your own work. Please ensure you have read the Academic Integrity Policy below.

Use of Generative AI

You are free to use Generative AI tools to complete this assignment. If you use Gen AI, please write a statement of acknowledgement of how you have used it for your assignment. **Generative AI often gives you incorrect information, so do not rely on it for the content of your assignment.**

Check this useful page from Sheffield University about how to use Gen AI for getting help and using it it for planning and developing your essay, including for getting help with proof reading of your work: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/study-skills/digital/generative-ai/essays-reports

Requesting an extension to assignment due date

On occasion, you may be in a situation when you aren't able to submit an assessment task on time. Extensions are only given in special circumstances, by completing a Special Consideration request. For more information on Special Consideration, see https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration

Late submission of assignments

If you haven't been approved for an extension and you submit your assessment task late, penalties are applied. Please contact me if you are in this position. Late submissions will receive a 5% per day penalty. If you submit the assessment task 10 days or more beyond the due date, without an approved extension, you will be awarded a maximum of 50% of the overall assessment marks. Weekends and public holidays are included.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Text analysis Part 1	30%	No	14/04/2025
Text analysis Part 2	50%	No	06/06/2025
Interpreting and appraising textual patterns	20%	No	12/05/2025

Text analysis Part 1

Assessment Type [1]: Case study/analysis
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 24 hours
Due: **14/04/2025**
Weighting: **30%**

In this assignment, students will apply constituency and experiential grammatical categories to naturally occurring text. They will identify the grammatical patterns in the text, and explain the relationship of these patterns to the social context of this text.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Differentiate the three functions of language: the experiential function (language construing experience), the interpersonal function (language enacting interpersonal relations), and the textual function (language creating coherent text)
- Apply grammatical concepts to the study of naturally occurring text
- Analyse grammatical patterning in naturally occurring text
- Appraise the effects of the grammatical patterning in text in relation to the nature of the social and cultural context of the text

Text analysis Part 2

Assessment Type [1]: Case study/analysis
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 40 hours
Due: **06/06/2025**
Weighting: **50%**

Using the same text as assignment 1, in this assignment students extend the analysis to apply the grammatical categories of the interpersonal and textual metafunctions. They will identify the grammatical patterns in the text, and explain the relationship of these patterns to the social

context of this text.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Differentiate the three functions of language: the experiential function (language construing experience), the interpersonal function (language enacting interpersonal relations), and the textual function (language creating coherent text)
- Apply grammatical concepts to the study of naturally occurring text
- Analyse grammatical patterning in naturally occurring text
- Appraise the effects of the grammatical patterning in text in relation to the nature of the social and cultural context of the text

Interpreting and appraising textual patterns

Assessment Type [1]: Quantitative analysis task
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 12 hours
Due: **12/05/2025**
Weighting: **20%**

Students are provided with a text that has already been analysed in relation to its experiential and interpersonal lexicogrammatical elements. Students identify, summarize and interpret the significance of the lexicogrammatical patterns in this text through a written submission.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Differentiate the three functions of language: the experiential function (language construing experience), the interpersonal function (language enacting interpersonal relations), and the textual function (language creating coherent text)
- Analyse grammatical patterning in naturally occurring text
- Appraise the effects of the grammatical patterning in text in relation to the nature of the social and cultural context of the text

---

[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment

task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

This unit involves a two hour weekly lecture, and a 1 hour weekly tutorial (beginning in Week 2). The unit has a choice of textbooks:

1. Butt, Fahey, Spinks, Yallop, Feez. 2012. *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide*. Palgrave Macmillan. This is only available in hard copy in the library. It is a shorter, simpler version of the content. The book is currently out of print. You can get it second hand - or you can access this pdf of the 2nd edition on line. There is also a copy of the third edition available at https://archive.org/.

2. Halliday and Matthiessen. 2014. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, Taylor and Francis. 2014. This book is available online through the library.

Butt et al. is a shorter, simpler introduction. Halliday and Matthiessen is a more comprehensive overview of the content covered in this unit.

Unit Schedule

Week	Lecture topics	Readings
1	**What is language? What is grammar?** *We begin this unit by exploring some ideas about the nature of language including how it is that we come to be users of language. Language is more than grammar, so we also need to understand the place of grammar within language. While often thought of as 'rules', grammar is a resource for meaning. I'll illustrate this point by looking at what verbs do. The verb is a structure that allows us to represent and construe process, flux and change. It's time to move beyond the 'verb is a doing word' definition, to explore the power and beauty of the grammar of verbs.* *Also, see my column here for background on the way grammar is explored in this unit.*	*Halliday's and Matthiessen's An Introduction to Functional Grammar (**IFG**): Chapter 1 – section 1.1; Chapter 2 – section 2.1* *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide-Second Edition (**UFG-2**): Chapter 1&2* *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide-Third Edition (**UFG-3**): Chapter 1&2*

2-3	**Constituency: units in grammar** In weeks 2-3, we extend our picture by looking at the other important units in grammar. We will look at the grammatical units of clause, group and phrase, word, and morpheme. To understand what we can 'see' in language structure we have to understand what motivates it, and relate it to the motif of 'choice'.	*IFG*: Chapter 6 *UFG-2*: Chapter 1&2 *UFG-3*: Chapter 3
4	**What is a clause?** To use language in the many and varied ways we interact, we need to put words into structures. The most important grammatical unit is the clause, because it is through the clause we create 'experiential', 'interpersonal' and 'textual meanings'. In this lecture, we will build on the two previous weeks by looking at whole clauses, and different types of clauses. We will even see clauses inside (i.e. 'embedded in') other clauses.	*IFG*: Chapter 2 - section 2.5-2.7 *UFG-2*: Chapter 2 *UFG-3*: Chapter 3
5-6	**Clause as representation: language construing experience** Humans use language for meaning making of three kinds. In weeks 5 and 6 we begin exploring how grammar allows us to make sense of experience, to turn experience into meaning that we can share with our nearest and dearest, or complete strangers. We will come back to the verbal group, and look at different kinds of verbs/processes, and how we use grammar to construe action, saying and thinking, and relations of identity and similarity.	*IFG*: Chapter 5 *UFG-2*: Chapter 3 *UFG-3*: Chapter 4
7-8	**Clause as exchange: language enacting social relationships** Humans don't produce linguistic structure as an end in itself. We don't just talk, we talk to someone, even when that someone is someone we don't know or can never know. There is always an audience for our talk. There are many dimensions to our social relations. For instance, how do you talk to people who have some kind of power over you? How does your talk reflect a relation of familiarity or intimacy? When you talk to very young kids, or to elderly people, how does your language vary? These kinds of distinctions are reflected and made through linguistic choices.	*IFG*: Chapter 4 *UFG-2*: Week 7: Chapter 4 Week 8: Chapter 5 *UFG-3*: Week 7: Chapter 5 Week 8: Chapter 6
9-10	**Clause as message: language for creating coherent text** Language allows us to make meanings of two kinds simultaneously: meanings about the world, and meanings about the social relations that pertain to a given situation. How do we make all this hang together? The textual function is the grammar for creating coherent texts. In weeks 9-10 we look into the options in grammar for the order of elements in a clause, and how this order has consequences for text structure and coherence.	*IFG*: Chapter 3 *UFG-2*: Chapter 6 *UFG-3*: Chapter 7
11	**Building up text** This week we look at the grammatical resources for linking and binding clauses together to create more complex clausal structures. We look at the choices speakers and writers have to give more or less prominence to meaning, and to create the 'logical' meanings that join clauses together.	*UFG-2*: Chapter 7 *UFG-2*: Chapter 7 *UFG-3*: Chapter 8

12	**Review and consolidation**	No new readings this week
	This week we work through all the analysis we have done so far, to bring out the patterns of meaning in a sample text.	
13	**Language in society, society in language**	See iLearn for suggested readings.
	We analyse real data in linguistics to help us understand the nature of language. But we also apply our insights to understanding all kinds of language-related issues, from language as an aesthetic resource in the study of literature, to language used to divide communities for political purposes. In this final lecture I examine some of the many applications of the tools you have studied in this unit.	

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

Academic Success

Academic Success provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the Service Connect Portal, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Changes from Previous Offering

Assessments aligned with new guidelines.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
20/ 02/ 2025	With apologies for the extra round of approval - I've amended the details of the readings to include a further textbook option, Cheers Annabelle

Unit information based on version 2025.03 of the Handbook