

3303

The History and Structure of English**Theron Francis, Ph.D.**

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Office Hours: MWF: 11:00 am - noon; TTh: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm.

Web-delivered, online course.

Methods of Delivery through Blackboard

1. Panopto Lectures
2. Web Conferencing through Blue Jeans
3. Discussion Posts on Lerer's *Inventing English*
4. Blackboard Quizzes on Lerer's *Inventing English*
5. Practice Exercises in *Language Files* uploaded to Blackboard chapter assignments.

Textbooks

Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics. 11th Edition. Eds.

Vedrana Mihalicek and Christin Wilson. Columbus, OH: OSU Press, 2011.

Lerer, Seth. *Inventing English: a portable history of the language*. New York: Columbia, 2007.

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY COURSE DESCRIPTION

The structural essentials of English, with some treatment of the historical development of the language, from Anglo-Saxon to modern English.

Instructor's Course Description

There are two goals of the course. Exploring the history of English will show us how the language has changed and continues to change. Languages change through contact with other languages. They change due to influence from within as well as from without. Languages are dynamic and multi-faceted. There is not one true, correct English from which we can prescribe ideal rules. The word "language" and the word "English" are both problematic terms. There are many dialects of English and therefore many Englishes. Some forms of speech may be more appropriate in certain contexts--and academic and written varieties of a language tend to be prescribed and formulaic--but no variety is essentially better than any other. Studying the history the English will reveal how the language has gone through many versions while being diverse in its varieties or dialects. I have selected the book *Inventing English* by Seth Lerer, which--unlike a textbook--is readable in style and can be read like a novel. I plan to read the first half of the book during the first three weeks of class, then return to the book and finish it during the final three weeks of the class.

In addition to covering the influences which changed the language, this course also covers the structure of the language. It is the structure of language in general--universal grammar in Chomsky's terms--which makes change possible. The descriptive study of samples of language helps to show the underlying biological underpinnings of language, which are innate to us as human beings, which are structurally patterned. Structure--in sounds, words, and sentences--explains creativity in language. From a few structural patterns, there is infinite variety in what we can say. Because of structure, most of what we say every day is absolutely original and was never said or heard before. To master the structural aspects of the language, I chose *Language Files*, 11th edition, produced by the Ohio State University's Department of Linguistics. The textbook provides readable explanations of linguistic patterns which are followed up by "practice" exercises that use the empirical method of descriptive linguistics. We will cover the first five sections of the book: the introduction, phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax.

DEPARTMENTAL ENG 3306 COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Understand the formal aspects of language: syntax, morphology, and phonology in English.
2. Understand language shift in sound, grammar, and meaning.
3. Understand language change in English in terms of cultural contact, globalization, and diversity.
4. Practice basic corpus analysis in order to develop a descriptive understanding of language.
5. Acquire a basic theoretical vocabulary for linguistics and English grammar.

English Program Learning Objectives:

Graduating students will demonstrate that they can

1. Construct essays that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development
2. Analyze literary works by applying principles of literary criticism or theory
3. Produce research papers that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of acceptable sources, employ them effectively through quotations or paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using MLA format
4. Demonstrate creativity or originality of thought in written or multimedia projects
5. Compare/contrast and analyze major works and periods within World, English, and American literature.

Projects

1. Blackboard Discussion posts on Lerer's *Inventing English*. (5/200 points)
2. Quizzes on Lerer's *Inventing English*: week four and final. (Each 50 points/100 total)
3. "Practice" exercises in *Language Files*. (10 @ 30 points each/300 total)
4. Term Paper on a linguist or philologist from history (300 points total; including statement of purpose and peer review 25 points each)
5. Class Participation (100 points)

1. Blackboard Discussions (200 points; 40 points each post, 5 total)

These are essentially short response papers of 300-500 words in length. Identify a passage with a topic that interests you. Then interpret, elaborate, apply or question the ideas in the passage.

2. Quizzes on Lerer's *Inventing English* (100 total points/ Each quiz 50 points)

These will be small scale, low stakes quizzes with multiple choice questions. The goal of these quizzes is to get read and retain key terms and concepts. We will have one quiz after reading the first half of the book around week four and a second quiz during exam week.

3. "Practice" exercises in *Language Files* (300 points; 10 exercises at 30 points each)

These exercises come from the "practice" section at the end of each unit in the *Language Files*. I will try to limit the scale of the assignments. You will have to turn in about one set of exercises per week through the middle 10 weeks of the course.

4. Term Paper on a Linguist or Philologist in History (300 points including statement of purpose and peer review)

Please submit a statement of purpose one month prior to submitting the paper. Your paper must provide linguistic examples and you must analyze the examples in terms of structure. What did the linguist think an aspect of language ranging from the history of language, to artificial language, from language development in children, to animal language and writing systems?

5. Class Participation**Online Conferences**

I plan to have online weekly conferences using Blue Jeans each Thursday or Friday. I will hold conferences on this Thursday and Friday at 3 pm in order to explain the syllabus, comment on *Inventing English* and test the Blue Jeans technology. We can change the dates and times for these weekly meetings later if you would like. Students are not obligated to participate in every web conference. The conferences will be informal conversations on the work we are doing in class. They should be increasingly important for the exercises in *Language Files* and for writing the final paper. I will hold one weekly web conference. In order to fulfill the expectations for class participation, I will expect each students to participate in at least 5 online conferences through the semester.

GRADING

You can earn up to 1000 total possible points. The number of points needed to earn the following grades are: 900-1000=A, 800-899=B, 700-799=C, 600-699=D, 0-599=F.

Projects	Due Date	%	Points
Discussions	5 posts	20	200
Quizzes on Lerer	2.23 and 5.14	10	100
Practice Exercises	10 weekly, 30 points each,	30	300
Term Paper	Semester End: August 14	10	300
Conferencing and Corresponding	Weekly: only 6 visits in semester	10	100
Total Points Available		100	1000

DEADLINES

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. All alternative arrangements must be approved before the relevant deadline. Late work without previous arrangement with me will only be accepted upon demonstration of extenuating circumstances.

DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

DEADLINES

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. All alternative arrangements must be approved before the relevant deadline. Late work without previous arrangement with me will only be accepted upon demonstration of extenuating circumstances.

Blackboard

If you confront technical issues which interfere with your ability to use Blackboard, contact the LTAC (Lobo Technology Assistance Center) at 432-837-8888 or <https://techassist.sulross.edu>

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Sul Ross State University provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, as soon as possible please contact Counseling and Accessibility Services:

Accessibility Services Coordinator
Counseling and Accessibility Services
Ferguson Hall Rm. 112
432-837-8203

Writing Center and Academic Learning Center

The Writing Center is located in MAB 102 and the Academic Learning Center is located in FH 213. Tutors are available to help you with any problems you may have with an assignment. Take advantage of this service any time you need help. The tutors are there for you. You may contact the Writing Center at extension 8270 and email writing@sulross.edu

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author's ideas from another source without acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an "F" on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from SRSU. If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, or Writing Center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

Course Calendar

Dates	Activities	Readings	Notes
Week 1			
1.20-22	History of English	Lerer Chapters 1-3	
Week 2			
1.26-30	History of English	Lerer Chapters 4-6	Discussion Response Post Due on Lerer Reading
Week 3			
2.2 – 2.6	History of English	Lerer Chapters 7-9	Discussion Response Post Due on Lerer Reading
Week 4			
2.9 – 2.13	Introduction	Language File 1 1 -11	Quiz on Lerer Open thru 2.23 Discussion Response Post Due on Lerer Reading
Week 5			
2.16 – 2.20	Introduction	Language Files 1 12 -29	Practice Exercise 1
Week 6			
2.23 -2.27	Phonetics	Language Files Phonetics 35 - 57	Practice Exercise 2
Week 7			
3.3 -3.6	Phonetics	Language Files Phonetics 58 -67	Practice Exercise 3

Week 8			
3.9 – 3.13	Phonology	Language Files Phonology 101 -115	Practice Exercise 4
Week 9			
3.16 -3.20	Spring break	Spring break	Spring break
Week 10			
3.23 -3.27	Phonology	Language Files Phonology 116 -134	Practice Exercise 5
Week 11			
3.30 – 4.3	Morpholog	Language Files Morphology 147 -164	Practice Exercise 6 4.1 Statement of Purpose for term paper due
Week 12			
4.6 – 4.10	Morpholog	Language Files Morphology 165 -175	Practice Exercise 7
Week 13			
4.13 – 4.17	Syntax	Language Files Syntax 195 -210	Practice Exercise 8
Week 14			
4.20 – 4.24	Syntax	Language Files Syntax 211 -229	Practice Exercise 9
Week 15			
4.27 – 5.1	History of English	Lerer chapters 10 - 12	Due Date for Term Paper Practice Exercise 10
Week 16			
5.4 – 5.6 Dead Days	History of English	Lerer Chapters 13 - 15	Discussion Response Post Due on Lerer Reading
Week 17			
5.11 – 5.14 Finals	Quiz on Lerer 50 points		Quiz on Lerer Discussion Response Post Due on Lerer Reading