



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Syntax of English / Anglų kalbos sintaksė	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Co-ordinator: Prof. Dr Julija Korostenskienė	Faculty of Philology Institute of Foreign Languages

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First cycle	Elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Interactive lectures, seminars, practice	Semester 3	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: Introduction to Linguistics, English Phonetics and Morphology I/II, II/II, Contemporary English Language I/V, II/V	Co-requisites (if any): None

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	133	64	69

Purpose of the course unit

This course aims to develop:

General Competences:

- Analytical and critical thinking skills in syntactic analysis and linguistic argumentation;
- Independent research abilities, effective time management, and academic self-discipline;
- Intercultural communication skills and collaborative teamwork in linguistic inquiry.

Subject-Specific Competences:

- Comprehensive knowledge of syntactic theory and its practical application to the analysis of the English language;
- Mastery of the English language system, with a focus on structural and functional aspects of syntax;
- Proficiency in constructing coherent, plausible, and well-argued syntactic analyses, recognizing linguistic variation and theoretical perspectives;
- Skills in conducting linguistic research, engaging with academic sources, and formulating evidence-based syntactic arguments.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Upon completion of the course, the students will: - Develop a strong understanding of syntax and its relation to general language structures;	- Interactive methods: brainstorming sessions, group discussions, pairwork, mindmaps, and case study analysis. - Problem-solving approaches to exploring syntactic phenomena.	- Written assessments: Open-ended and closed-ended tasks, including sentence analysis and syntactic argumentation. - Interim tests: Tasks involving structural analysis, comparative syntactic

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyze English sentence structures using both the traditional and basic generative syntactic frameworks; - Identify syntactic patterns and comment on variations across different registers; - Engage critically with syntactic theories, evaluate linguistic arguments, and apply theoretical knowledge to language teaching and analysis; - Recognize the system of syntax, its components, and the role of specific linguistic phenomena within it; - Construct a coherent, plausible, and grammatically accurate argumentation in the analysis of English sentences, justifying syntactic decisions and crediting possible caveats or alternative solutions; - Compare syntactic structures across English and the languages spoken in class, making projections for cross-linguistic analysis; - Gain basic proficiency in using syntactic software and develop awareness of available resources for syntactic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging with scientific sources: conducting information searches, analyzing materials, and processing findings. - Preparation for practical classes, including self-directed research and individual/group tasks to reinforce learning. - Incorporating both traditional and interactive techniques, such as PowerPoint-based lectures and video recordings, to support theory delivery and encourage active student involvement. - Application of theoretical concepts to real-world tasks and assignments, such as sentence analysis and syntactic argumentation. 	<p>discussion, and application of generative concepts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seminar participation: Evaluation of engagement in discussions, collaborative problem-solving, peer feedback; comparative syntactic analysis of English and another language spoken in class, demonstrating theoretical and applied knowledge. - Practical application: Use of specialized syntactic software in analysis, with reflection on its utility. - Final examination: A combination of theoretical discussion and applied syntactic analysis.
<p>The students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate effectively, demonstrating leadership and active participation in group learning; - Engage in discussions, debates, and collaborative analysis of syntactic phenomena. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case study analysis and problem-solving tasks, completed individually, in pairs, and in groups. - Active participation in discussions and debates. - Collaborative work to develop, test, and refine hypotheses related to syntactic phenomena. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case study evaluation: Students will work individually, in pairs, and in groups to develop and test hypotheses, engaging in discussions and completing related tasks. - Practical task completion: Students will demonstrate their ability to test hypotheses, engage in problem-solving, and present their final solutions.
<p>The students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop independent learning strategies, effectively researching and applying syntactic knowledge from various sources; - Plan and organize independent study, identifying and utilizing relevant printed, electronic, and linguistic resources; - Apply critical thinking in selecting effective strategies for advanced language acquisition and syntactic analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-directed learning: Encouraging independent exploration of syntactic concepts through research and critical analysis of various resources (printed, electronic, and linguistic). - Preparation for class activities: Students engage in structured tasks that require them to plan and organize their study and synthesize information from different sources. - Incorporating a mix of resources, including online databases, academic journals, and syntactic software, to enhance learning. - Active learning strategies: Assigning tasks that require students to apply knowledge independently, including case studies and practice problems that foster critical thinking and problem-solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task completion: Assessing students' ability to complete home assignments and tasks that reflect their understanding and independent application of syntactic theories. - Home assignments: Evaluating students' capacity to independently research and apply syntactic knowledge from various resources in assignments. - Tests and presentations: Assessing the quality of students' research, critical thinking, and their ability to communicate their findings clearly and effectively. - Reflection on learning: In some cases, students may be asked to reflect on their learning process, highlighting how they applied independent study strategies and identified key resources for their projects.

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. Introducing the course, its aims, outline of the course, learning outcomes, requirements, assessment criteria. Aspects of syntax.	2		1				3	2	
2. Basic terms and concepts: Syntax, grammar, clause, sentence. Types of clauses. Basic clause patterns. The <i>subject</i> in English, ways of expressing it in a sentence, syntax of the subject. Canonical vs non-canonical clauses. The concept of derivation. Traditional syntax vs generative syntax. Main principles of traditional and generative syntactic analysis.	4		4				4	8	
3. The <i>predicate</i> and its types in light of basic clause patterns. The concept of transitivity, types of verbs, types of verb complementation, basic clause patterns. Alternative terminology. The notion of licensing. The concept of agreement (concord) in syntax. Subject/predicate agreement. Subjecthood diagnostics. Constituency testing. A brief look into ambiguity. Syntactic tools in the analysis of ambiguity and generative syntactic representation	4		5				9	8	
4. <i>Complements and adjuncts</i> . Adjunction vs complementation. Licensing. Implications of modification. The category A. Mixed types: adverbial complements. Terminology: adjunct, adverbial, Lith <i>adverbialas</i> . Semantic types of adjuncts. Classification of adverbial clauses. Cross-linguistic observations: comparisons with regularities in the languages spoken in the class. Structural differences between complements and adjuncts in generative syntactic representation.	4		4				8	8	
5. Basic clause patterns vs clause structure. Apposition. Structural relations in a sentence. Compound and complex sentences. Compound complex sentences. Terminology: main clause (matrix, root clauses), embedded clauses, subordinate clauses, dependent clauses. The placement of sentence parts on a generative syntactic tree.	4		4				8	8	
6. Embedded clauses. Non-finite clauses. Motivation of non-finite constructions as clauses. Gerund, participle, and infinitive clauses. Nominative absolute	2		2				4	5	

constructions. Differentiation criteria and analysis procedure.								
7. Embedded clauses. Complement clauses, defining/non-defining relative clauses, adverbial clauses. Alternative terminology by parts of speech: noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses. Application of basic clause patterns to determine the function of embedded clauses in a sentence. Differences between the main and embedded clauses, their generative syntactic representation.	4		4				8	8
8. Supplementary notions: prepositional complements; the oblique; semantic roles; subtypes of adverbial complements. Theta theory and theta-grids.	2		2				4	4
9. Word order, its significance and the inventory of possible word order variants in English. Information packaging and its main types. The concept of movement in traditional and generative syntax.	2		2				4	5
10. Applying the terminological inventory and its properties to determining sentence structure	2		2				4	5
Conclusions and Summary of the course.	2		2				4	8
Total	32		32				64	69

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
<p>Cumulative assessment:</p> <p>a) Participation during seminars: completion of self-assessment quizzes and homework assignments, asking and answering questions, developing possible solutions, and building hypotheses both individually and in teams</p>	40%	During the semester	<p>The final mark will be based on a cumulative assessment of active participation, completion of six ungraded self-assessment quizzes, and six graded mini-tests (which include open/closed questions and practical tasks) (70%), along with the final test result (30%). Absence from seminars, missed self-assessment quizzes, or failure to complete mini-tests on time can only be compensated in cases of extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Participation during seminars is crucial. In-class discussions often extend beyond the exercises at hand, and the ability to think critically, ask in-depth questions, and generate hypotheses is integral to both the learning and assessment process. During seminars, generative syntactic analysis will be integrated as part of the overall educational framework, helping students learn to interpret and construct generative syntactic tree diagrams. While this component will not be the primary focus of the final examination, it will be assessed during seminar activities throughout the semester, alongside the traditional syntactic framework. Therefore, seminar participation cannot be compensated by the final test alone.</p> <p>Self-assessment quizzes will feature questions on terminology, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts covered and their ability to apply the theory in practical tasks. Absences during the self-assessment test can be compensated by taking a make-up test, provided that the absence is justified with a doctor's note in case of illness.</p>

			<p><i>A note on active participation:</i> in exceptional cases, <i>one</i> point may be added to the final grade. This may only be done if the student completes homework assignments, regularly and actively participates in class discussions by asking relevant questions, answering questions that arise, and in general, effectively collaborates during class time throughout the term.</p> <p>In very exceptional circumstances, if the student has been active in all seminars, has completed all quizzes with top results, and has overall demonstrated outstanding understanding of the syntactic phenomena covered throughout the class, they may be exempted from the final exam with the grade 10 for the course.</p> <p>This course follows modern pedagogical approaches, viewing students as active contributors rather than passive recipients of information. Active participation in seminars is essential, and engagement during lectures is strongly encouraged.</p> <p>A note on attendance and calculation of the final grade for the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The student who has missed more than three seminars, may be asked to attend an oral colloquium or take a test on Moodle in order to be admitted to the final exam.</i> - <i>The student who has missed more than 30% of seminars will not be admitted to the exam. An exception may be made in grave circumstances (e.g., a disease), in which case the student must inform the instructor and provide official written evidence.</i> - <i>The student who has not attended seminars regularly, but has completed all written assignments, may not expect a final grade higher than 8 (eight).</i> <p>AI use and language policy:</p> <p><i>All submitted work must be produced independently by the student and reflect their reasoning process. The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT or similar systems) for producing assignment content is not permitted.</i></p>
b) 6 mini-tests per semester, 6 x 5%	30%	During the semester	The mini-tests summarise and verify the student's understanding of the topic covered and practical assignments delivered and completed in class. Each test contains up to 25 questions, analogous to those practiced in the seminars for which the test is due. Given everyone's agreement, the tests may be delivered on Moodle at a time negotiated and agreed upon with the students. Otherwise, the tests shall be delivered during the seminars.
Final test/written examination	30%	Exam time	<p>The final test consists of up to 25 closed- and open-ended questions analogous to those provided, analysed, and thoroughly discussed in class (both lectures and seminars) throughout the semester. The assessment is based on the following criteria: understanding of the grammatical system of the English language; ability to produce correct syntactic structures according to the conditions provided; ability to interpret given syntactic structures and construct those assigned correctly; ability to define and use terminology of syntax in the sentence and text analysis; as well as the ability to explain and apply punctuation rules in writing.</p> <p>Given everyone's agreement, the test may be delivered on Moodle at a time negotiated and agreed upon with the students. Otherwise, the test shall be delivered in class.</p>

			<p>During mid-term and prior to the examination, students may be asked to take an oral test checking their understanding of the topics and notions covered thus far.</p> <p>If the student has missed 30% of the seminars or more during the semester, they will be asked to take a colloquium prior to being admitted to the examination.</p> <p><i>The final written test consists of no more than 25 tasks of different types (closed/open questions). The students are asked to analyze sentences assigned demonstrating their knowledge and ability to argumentation systematically built and enhanced in class throughout the course. The grade depends on how many per cent of correct answers have been provided.</i></p>
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Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Burch, C.B	2003	A Writer's Grammar		Longman
Brinton, L.J. & Brinton, D. M.	2010/2022	The Linguistic Structure of Modern English. Online Workbook		John Benjamins https://doi.org/10.1075/z.156.workbook
Huddleston, R. and G. Pullum (eds.).	2007	A Student's Introduction to English Grammar		CUP
Recommended reading				
Aarts, B.	2011	Oxford Modern English Grammar		OUP
Bórjars, K., Burridge, K.	2019	Introducing English Grammar		Abingdon: Routledge.
Burton-Roberts, N.	2011	Analysing Sentences: An Introduction to English Syntax		Pearson
Carnie, A.	2012	Syntax: A Generative Introduction	3rd ed.	Wiley-Blackwell.
Foley, M.; D. Hall	2003	Longman Advanced Learner's Grammar		Harlow: Longman.
Wekker H., Haegeman, L.	2002	A Modern Course in English Syntax		Routledge
Yule G.	2006	Oxford Practice Grammar (Advanced)		CUP
Corpus resources for syntactic analysis		e.g., The British National Corpus (BNC), COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English); Sketch Engine		https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/ , https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/ , https://www.sketchengine.eu/
Syntactic software, internet resources and online multimedia platforms		Free online Syntax Tree Generators, educational websites <i>youtube.com</i>		e.g., https://mshang.ca/syntaxree/ ; https://lin-tree-solver.adambcomer.com/ , https://ironcreek.net/syntaxtree/