

Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics

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Office location: Institute for English and American Studies: 3G 02 32

Office hours: Th 16.00 – 17.00 and by appointment

Course overview:

As one of the courses that satisfies the degree requirement “Linguistics for Language Teachers,” this *vertiefender Universitätskurs* (VK) introduces students to a school of linguistic thought, systemic functional linguistics (SFL), that has proven to have significant and fruitful applications for language education. Specifically, because of its inherent focus on how people use language in specific contexts and how that language use is structured, SFL provides the framework for understanding and analyzing the connections between grammar, discourse, and social activity. As such, language educators schooled in SFL have the tools to analyze the wide range of discourses that are present in education (e.g., teacher-student classroom interaction, learner written and spoken language, instructional materials, administrative parlance). To develop students’ ability to conduct such discourse analysis, this course will cover the fundamental conceptual and methodological tools the SFL approach makes available.

Course structure:

After an introduction into the basic principles of an SFL approach to language, the course will focus on its key theoretical constructs (genre, register, metafunctions). **Genre** and **register** provide the framework for understanding the cultural and situational context in which language use unfolds, and the **metafunctions** illuminate the types of meanings we make when we use language: sharing ideas about experiences in the world (experiential metafunction), making connections between these ideas (logical metafunction), interacting with others (interpersonal metafunction), and constructing coherent texts in written and spoken modes (textual metafunction). The grammar used to describe those metafunctions will receive particular attention. Guiding all of this work will be three central questions: How is language structured to make meanings? Which choices are made to achieve those meanings? How does context affect those choices? A textbook will be used to learn about the major principles and applications of SFL. In addition, there will be weekly exercises to apply these principles to language education. The course will culminate in individual student projects (project paper or bachelor paper) in which they conduct an SFL-informed analysis of language education discourse.

Course objectives:

By the end of this course participants will be able to

- explain how cultural and situational contexts affect language choice and use;
- conduct a genre-based analysis of texts;
- describe the linguistic resources used to express and connect ideas, interact with others, and create coherent texts;
- conduct a functional analysis of first and/or second language discourse

Course equivalent:

This course is situated in the required module *Aufbauwissen Linguistik* (UF EN 09) and, within that module, categorized as the “VK Linguistics for Language Teachers.”

Required course materials:

Eggins, S. (2004). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics* (2nd ed.). London: Continuum. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC04367439>

Recommended course materials:

- Christie, F., & Derewianka, B. (2008). *School discourse. Learning to write across the years of schooling*. London: Continuum. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC07565355>
- Derewianka, B. (1990). *Exploring how texts work*. Newton, NSW, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.
- Derewianka, B. (2011). *A new grammar companion for teachers*. Sydney: Primary English Teaching Association.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *An introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). London: Arnold. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC11024617>
- Martin, J. R., Matthiessen, C. M. I. M., & Painter, C. (1997). *Working with functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC01861421>
- Matthiessen, C. M. I. M., Lam, M., & Kazuhiro Teruya, K.. (2010). *Key terms in systemic functional linguistics*. London: Continuum. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC08312666>
- [Zotero](#), Endnote, or comparable reference management software

Course grade:

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| Participation | 10 points |
| Weekly assignments | 30 points |
| Final project/paper | 20 points (project report) OR 60 points (bachelor paper) |

VK: “1” = 54-60; “2” = 48-53; “3” = 42-47; “4” = 36-41; “5” = 0-35

VK+BEd paper: “1” = 90-100; “2” = 80-89; “3” = 70-79; “4” = 60-69; “5” = 0-59

Minimum requirements:

- regular class attendance (maximum 2 absences)
- submission of all assignments on time
- active engagement in class discussions
- submission of project report / bachelor paper on time
- attainment of at least 50% in each of 3 categories (participation; assignments; final project)

Important dates:

- October 31: last day to deregister from the course without consequences
- December 6: Project proposal due (1 page, single-spaced)
- December 10-13: Individual meeting to discuss project
- December 13: last day to indicate plan for project report or bachelor paper
- January 28: Submission of paper for those who need the BEd certificate in time for MEd enrollment in Sommersemester 2019
- January 31: last class meeting
- February 11: Submission of paper for those who need a grade for Sommersemester registration
- February 25: Submission of paper for all others

Preliminary semester outline of 13 class meetings (subject to change):

Thursday, October 11: Introduction

- Eggins, Ch 1

Thursday, October 18: Cultural context of language use: Genre

- Eggins, Ch 3
- Genre exercises (Mu)

Thursday, October 25: Situational context of language use: Register

- Eggins, Ch 4
- Register exercises (Mu)

Thursday, November 8: Applications of genre & register

- Genre & register exercises (Mu)

Thursday, November 15: The grammar for expressing ideas (transitivity)

- Eggins, Ch 8
- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, November 22: Applications of transitivity (& Thanksgiving!)

- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, November 29: The grammar for connecting ideas (clause complex)

- Eggins, Ch 9
- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, December 6: Applications of the clause complex

- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, December 13: The grammar for interacting with others (mood)

- Eggins, Ch 6
- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, January 10: Applications of mood

- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, January 17: The grammar for creating coherent texts (theme)

- Eggins, Ch 10
- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, January 24: Applications of theme

- Exercises from Martin et al., 1997 (Mu)

Thursday, January 31: Summary and concluding discussion