



Course Specification

(Bachelor)

Course Title: Syntax

Course Code: ENG3345-3

Program: Bachelor of Arts in English

Department: Department of English

College: College of Languages and Translation

Institution: King Khalid University

Version: 2

Last Revision Date: February 11, 2026

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A. General information about the course:

1. Course Identification

1. Credit hours: (3)

2. Course type

- A. ☐ University ☐ College ☒ Department ☐ Track ☐ Others
- B. ☒ Required ☐ Elective

3. Level/year at which this course is offered: (Semester 6 - Year 3)

4. Course General Description:

Syntax (ENG3345-3) offers an in-depth exploration of the structural organization of English sentences through the study of word categories, phrase structure, and hierarchical syntactic relations. The course introduces students to major theoretical frameworks in syntax, with particular emphasis on the Minimalist Program, while also engaging with foundational concepts such as constituency, syntactic ambiguity, complement structures, movement, and transformational rules.

Through systematic analysis of grammatical constructions—including verb phrases, noun phrases, adjective phrases, adverbial phrases, and complementizer phrases—students learn to apply diagnostic tests, evaluate grammaticality, and interpret structural representations. The course emphasizes critical thinking and analytical skills by training students to identify underlying syntactic patterns, examine relationships among sentence components, and construct well-reasoned syntactic arguments. By the end of the course, students will have developed a strong theoretical and practical understanding of modern syntactic analysis and its applications in linguistic inquiry.

5. Pre-requirements for this course (if any):

ENG2341-3 Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics

6. Co-requisites for this course (if any):

N/A

7. Course Main Objective(s):

Syntax (ENG3345-3) aims to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles and structural components of English syntax.
- Enable students to identify and analyze the core syntactic categories and phrase types—including NP, VP, AP, PP, ADVP, IP, and CP—and understand how they interact in sentence formation.
- Strengthen students' ability to apply syntactic tests (such as constituency tests, transformation rules, and ambiguity diagnostics) to evaluate phrase and sentence structure.



- Enhance students' proficiency in recognizing and explaining grammaticality and ungrammaticality based on theoretical criteria.
- Introduce and contextualize key syntactic theories, with a strong focus on the Minimalist Program, guiding students in understanding how modern syntactic models account for structural relations.
- Foster critical thinking and analytical reasoning by encouraging students to construct, evaluate, and compare syntactic representations and theoretical explanations.
- Cultivate the ability to use syntactic argumentation to interpret structural patterns, justify analyses, and provide evidence-based explanations for sentence behavior.

2. Teaching mode (mark all that apply)

No	Mode of Instruction	Contact Hours	Percentage
1	Traditional classroom	45	100%
2	E-learning	-	-
3	Hybrid • Traditional classroom • E-learning	-	-
4	Distance learning	-	-

3. Contact Hours (based on the academic semester)

No	Activity	Contact Hours
1.	Lectures	45
2.	Laboratory/Studio	-
3.	Field	-
4.	Tutorial	-
5.	Others (specify)	-
Total		45

B. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), Teaching Strategies and Assessment Methods

Code	Course Learning Outcomes	Code of PLOs aligned with the program	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods
1.0	Knowledge and understanding			
1.1	Identify major syntactic categories (NP, VP, AP, PP, AdvP, IP, CP) and explain	K1, K2	• Interactive lectures	• Quizzes • Midterm Exam



Code	Course Learning Outcomes	Code of PLOs aligned with the program	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods
	their functions in English sentence structure.		- Guided analysis of examples - Visual diagrams.	
1.2	Demonstrate understanding of fundamental syntactic principles, including constituency, hierarchical structure, and grammatical relations.	K1, K3	- Lectures - Problem-solving sessions - Class discussions.	- Midterm Exam - Assignments
1.3	Explain key theoretical concepts from the Minimalist Program and other major syntactic frameworks.	K2, K4	- Theory-based lectures - Readings - Instructor explanations.	- Midterm Exam - Final Exam
2.0	Skills			
2.1	Apply syntactic tests (constituency tests, movement tests, ambiguity tests) to analyze phrase and sentence structure.	S1	- Task-based exercises - pair/group analysis - Instructor modeling.	- Midterm Exam - Final Exam - Assignments
2.2	Construct syntactic trees for simple and complex sentences using contemporary frameworks (X-bar and Minimalist).	S1, S2	- Hands-on practice - Tree-drawing workshops - Peer collaboration	- Assignments - Midterm Exam
2.3	Evaluate grammaticality and ungrammaticality of sentences using evidence-based syntactic reasoning.	S2	- Critical-thinking tasks - Guided analysis - Group problem solving	- Midterm Exam - Final Exam

Code	Course Learning Outcomes	Code of PLOs aligned with the program	Teaching Strategies	Assessment Methods
2.4	Analyze and explain structural ambiguity in English sentences.	S3	- Analytical activities - Example-driven lectures - Group discussion.	- Quizzes - Final Exam - Assignments
3.0	Values, autonomy, and responsibility			
3.1	Demonstrate academic responsibility and consistency in completing syntactic analyses and readings.	V2	- Independent study - instructor mentoring - Progress tracking.	- Participation - Homework
3.2	Collaborate effectively with peers to solve syntactic problems and share linguistic insights.	V2	- Group work - Peer-review sessions - Collaborative workshops.	- Group activities - Peer evaluation
3.3	Show confidence and adaptability in applying syntactic theories to new or unfamiliar linguistic data.	V3	- Practice with unfamiliar examples - Instructor coaching - Reflective tasks.	- Instructor observation - Final Exam

C. Course Content

No	List of Topics	Contact Hours
1.	Categories and Phrases	3
2.	The structure of the verb group (VGP) in the VP	3
3.	The structure of the PP, AP, AdvP, and NP	3
4.	Clauses as parts of NPs and Aps	3
5.	Complement Options	3
6.	Constituency Tests/Phrase Structure Rules	3
7.	Syntactic Ambiguity	3
8.	CP Complements	3





9.	Transformational Rules (Yes-no Questions)	3
10.	Transformational Rules (Wh- Questions)	3
11.	Transformational Rules (Relative Clauses)	3
12.	Principles of Minimalist Program	3
13.	Binary Branching	3
14.	Break	3
15.	Practice and revision	3
Total		45

D. Students Assessment Activities

No	Assessment Activities *	Assessment timing (in week no)	Percentage of Total Assessment Score
1.	Quizes	Weeks 4 &12	10%
2.	Assignment 1	Week 6	10%
3.	Assignment 2	Week 10	10%
5.	Midterm Exam	Week 8	30
6.	Final Exam	Week 16	40%

E. Learning Resources and Facilities

1. References and Learning Resources

Required Textbooks	Compiled material from the following textbooks will be used: 1. O' Grady, W. (1997). Syntax: The analysis of sentence structure. In W. O'Grady, M. Dobrovolsky, & F. Katamba (Eds.), Contemporary linguistics: An introduction (pp. 181-244). 2. Gelderen, Elly Van. 2010. An Introduction to the Grammar of English. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company 3. Radford, Andrew. 2016. Analysing English Sentences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Essential References	• Adger, David. 2003. Core Syntax: A Minimalist Approach. Oxford: Oxford University Press. • Newson, Mark, et al., 2006. Basic English Syntax with Exercises. Budapest: Bolcsesz konzorcium. • Carnie, Andrew. 2008. Constituent Structure. Oxford: Oxford University Press. • Radford, Andrew. 2009. An Introduction to English Sentence Structure. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press



Electronic Materials	The Internet Grammar of English A comprehensive, interactive platform focusing on English grammar, including syntax. Visit Internet Grammar of English
Other Learning Materials	https://www.grammarbook.com/ is a great resource for learning English syntax. The site offers in-depth explanations of grammar rules, as well as practice exercises and quizzes. GrammarBook.com also has a number of specialized resources for learners of different levels, including business English and academic English.

2. Required Facilities and equipment

Items	Resources
Facilities	- Standard classroom accommodating 25–30 students - Adequate lighting and ventilation - Comfortable seating arrangements suitable for group discussion - Whiteboard and notice board
Technology equipment	- Computer and stable internet connection for instructor use - Data projector and screen - Audio speakers for multimedia presentations (Optional) Smart board for interactive teaching
Other equipment	- Whiteboard markers and erasers - Portable microphone (if required) - Display or bulletin board for course announcements
Additional resources	- Access to the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) and online academic databases (Optional) Language laboratory facilities for multimedia learning (Optional) Charging stations or designated tech-use areas for student devices



F. Assessment of Course Quality

Assessment Areas/Issues	Assessor	Assessment Methods
Effectiveness of teaching	Assessed by students, faculty, program leaders, and peer reviewers using direct feedback and evaluations.	Assessed through student evaluations, peer reviews, classroom observations, and teaching feedback surveys.
Effectiveness of students' assessment	Evaluated by students, faculty, and program leaders through exam performance, project outcomes, and feedback.	Evaluated through analysis of exam results, project outcomes, grading consistency, and student feedback.
Quality of learning resources	Reviewed by faculty and program leaders based on student feedback and peer reviews.	Reviewed via surveys, resource usage analytics, student and faculty feedback, and comparison with academic standards.
The extent to which CLOs have been achieved	Measured by faculty, program leaders, and peer reviewers using assessments, exams, and student portfolios.	Measured through direct assessments like exams, projects, portfolios, and indirect methods like student self-assessment and surveys.

G. Specification Approval

COUNCIL /COMMITTEE	ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COUNCIL
REFERENCE NO.	47-15-2
DATE	FEBRUARY 25, 2026

