

Spoken English for Nonnative Speakers: Integrated Academic Skills

Fall 2019

Linguistics 380-0-21 Annenberg G31 (4:00-5:20)

Linguistics 380-0-22 Annenberg G29 (5:30-6:50)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00-12:00, or by appointment

Course website (a.k.a. "Canvas"): <http://canvas.northwestern.edu>

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe key features of the sound structure of English, including the articulation of consonants and vowels, word stress, linking, intonation, and prosody.
2. Describe key components of oral language proficiency as measured by the Versant English Test and specified in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and Can-Do Statements.
3. Compare and contrast academic norms across cultures.
4. Identify and execute strategies for effective communication in the American academic context, including small talk, email, reporting on visual information, and formal/informal presentations.
5. Identify their own specific strengths and weaknesses when using spoken English. Demonstrate progress toward achieving goals targeting improved proficiency.

Course Description

The goal of this course is to give students the tools to improve their intelligibility and effectiveness when communicating in English, with an emphasis on communication in the American academic context. Students will consider how communication in the academic context may vary across cultures, and become acquainted with American norms and expectations. They will develop key skills for academic interactions, such as making small talk, effective use of email, and formal/informal presentations. Along the way, students will learn about the sound structure of English as they work towards improved pronunciation and fluency. Students will have an opportunity to consider their own oral English proficiency in light of proficiency assessments used at Northwestern, and will receive feedback on Versant test performance and practice sessions.

Integrated Academic Skills is designed to be a two-quarter sequence, so most students will enroll in LING 380, 482, and 483 again in winter quarter. However, students will be given the option to take an advisory Versant test again at the end of fall quarter. Those who score 60 or above will not be required to enroll in Integrated Academic Skills in winter quarter.

Materials (required)

Grant, Linda (2016). *Well Said: Pronunciation for Clear Communication*, 4th edition

Please bring this text to every class. It is available at the Norris bookstore, or online. Be sure to purchase the 4th edition.

Eligibility and Enrollment

This course is required for international graduate students of Northwestern University who qualify for Integrated Academic Skills. It is not open to other students. If you are an Integrated Academic Skills student and have not already been enrolled, please contact me as soon as possible.

Students will be registered for this course in CAESAR. Because The Graduate School has mandated your participation, you do not have the option to drop the course. Note, however, that this is a non-credit course: it does not affect your grade point average, and the course load is zero (0).

Assessment

As with all non-credit courses at Northwestern, no letter grade for this course will appear on your transcript. Instead, you will receive a grade of “satisfactory” (S) or “unsatisfactory” (U). To determine whether your final grade is S or U, point values will be assigned to each assignment in this course. These grades will be combined for a final course average, weighted by the percentages listed below. To receive a grade of S, your final course average must be 74% or higher.

Attendance & Participation

Learning from this course requires active participation, and regular attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend a class due to illness, a conflict with an academic commitment, or other reason, please contact me as soon as possible by email. Students will be allowed a maximum of two excused absences during the quarter (excused means you have contacted me about your absence and have made plans to make up the material you have missed). *Any unexcused absences, or more than two excused absences, may result in a grade of “U” for the quarter.*

Assignments

Homework assignments will be evaluated by the instructor, and are due on the date listed. Late homework assignments will only be accepted with permission of the instructor. Students will also receive feedback on in-class activities.

Students will complete several **recording assignments** to provide samples of their English proficiency in different tasks. Students will receive individual instructor feedback on each to identify their strengths and weaknesses when using spoken English and provide suggestions for improvement (Course Objective 5). Particular emphasis will be put on intelligibility, drawing on knowledge of the sound structure of English (Course Objective 1).

Students will complete **presentation assignments** with the goal of effective communication in informal and formal academic presentations (Course Objective 4). Students will receive feedback to identify strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement (Course Objective 5).

Students will complete periodic **Canvas quizzes** about the sound structure of English (Course Objective 1), language learning and proficiency (Course Objective 2), academic culture in the US (Course Objective 3), and strategies for effective communication in the academic context (Course Objective 4).

Students will submit short **writing assignments** to set goals for the course (Course Objective 5), practice effective written email communication with faculty.

Students will participate in group **Versant practice sessions** to gain confidence and familiarity with the test, and receive instructor feedback on performance (Course Objective 4, Course Objective 5).

Breakdown of final grade

Recording Assignments: 30%

Presentation Assignments: 25%

Canvas Quizzes: 20%

Written Assignments: 20%

Versant Practice Sessions: 5%

A note on our learning environment

All speakers of English make mistakes occasionally. Each student will enter this class with different skills and strengths in English, and no one will excel in every area. Errors are inevitable, but they are an asset to learning, not an obstacle! They provide an important opportunity for feedback, which will in turn help you to improve your language skills. A friendly atmosphere where everyone is comfortable making mistakes is the key to making progress, so please be respectful of your classmates' questions and comments, and offer to help one another as needed.

Please keep your phones and dictionaries in your bag during class, and keep your laptops and tablets closed.

If you have questions, chances are other students do, too. You are encouraged to ask lots of questions, even if they do not directly pertain to the day's lesson (and time will be set aside each day for such questions). Please just ask!

Tentative Schedule

Note: The following is subject to change. Revisions to the syllabus will be posted on Canvas.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Homework Due</u>
Unit 1: Language Learning & Assessment		
Tuesday, 9/24 Class 1	Course Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Icebreaker Communicative Focus: Language learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tips and resources for learning inside and outside of class 	
Thursday, 9/26 Class 2	Communicative Focus: English proficiency assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Versant Test discussion ACTFL Can-Do Statements 	<u>Recording Assignment 1</u> Record and submit Pronunciation Profile from <i>Well Said</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part A, Reading 1 (p. 1-2) Part B, Question 1 (p. 3)
Tuesday, 10/1 Class 3	Meet in MAD Studio, Kresge Hall 2524 Communicative Focus: Versant practice	<u>Writing Assignment 1</u> Goal Setting Questionnaire: Submit answers to questions about your goals for the quarter
Unit 2: Academic Culture		
Thursday, 10/3 Class 4	Communicative Focus: Academic culture in your home country Pronunciation Focus: International Phonetic Alphabet, Voicing	Read and go over exercises in <i>Well Said</i> , pp. 7-16, 18-24
Tuesday, 10/8 Class 5	Communicative Focus: Higher education in the US, participating in class Pronunciation Focus: Consonants	<u>Canvas Quiz 1</u> Submit answers to Canvas quiz <i>Well Said</i> , pp. 146-152
Thursday, 10/10 Class 6	Communicative Focus: Comparing academic norms across cultures Pronunciation Focus: Vowels	<i>Well Said</i> , pp. 120-126
Tuesday, 10/15 Class 7	Communicative Focus: Academic integrity Pronunciation Focus: Grammatical endings	<u>Canvas Quiz 2</u> Submit answers to Canvas quiz <i>Well Said</i> , pp. 27-35
Unit 3: Communicating with Americans		
Thursday, 10/17 Class 8	Communicative Focus: Asking questions and making small talk	<u>Recording Assignment 2</u> Listen to my recording of Recording Assignment 1, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small talk round robin 	then listen to your own. Submit a reflection on any similarities/ differences you notice.
Tuesday, 10/22 Class 9	Communicative Focus: Conversing with Americans Informal presentations	<u>Presentation Assignment 1</u> Be prepared to give a 2-3 minute, informal presentation about a challenging interaction you've had with an American
Thursday, 10/24 Class 10	Communicative Focus: Conversing with Americans Informal presentations continued Pronunciation Focus: Individual word stress	<u>Canvas Quiz 3</u> Submit answers to Canvas quiz <i>Well Said</i> , pp. 39-48, 51-56
Tuesday, 10/29 Class 11	Communicative Focus: Email for academic purposes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email conventions, strategies for effective email 	<u>Writing Assignment 2</u> Send an email to the instructor explaining an upcoming absence
Thursday, 10/31	NO CLASS	
Tuesday, 11/5 Class 12	Meet in MAD Studio, Kresge Hall 2524 Communicative Focus: Paraphrasing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paraphrasing practice • Versant practice 	<u>Writing Assignment 3</u> Revise and re-submit your original email for feedback
Unit 4: Presentation Skills, Communicating About Your Academic Interests		
Thursday, 11/7 Class 13	Communicative Focus: Describing your academic area of interest Pronunciation Focus: Rhythm in sentences	<u>Canvas Quiz 4</u> Submit answers to Canvas quiz <i>Well Said</i> , pp. 59-68
Tuesday, 11/12 Class 14	Communicative Focus: Presentation skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation analysis, strategies Pronunciation Focus: Thought groups & focus words	<i>Well Said</i> , pp. 73-77, 80-89 <u>Writing Assignment 4</u> Submit a link to a presentation you think is

		particularly effective, and include a short discussion of your reasoning
Thursday, 11/14 Class 15	Communicative Focus: Reporting on visual information Pronunciation Focus: Intonation	<i>Well Said</i> , pp. 93-99 <u>Presentation Assignment 2</u> Bring in one slide to present with a chart, graph, or other visual information (from your own research or another's)
Tuesday, 11/19 Class 16	Individual Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual, formal presentations 	<u>Presentation Assignment 3</u> Be prepared to deliver a formal, 10 minute presentation to the class
Thursday, 11/21 Class 17	Individual Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual, formal presentations 	<u>Recording Assignment 3</u> Re-record and submit Pronunciation Profile from <i>Well Said</i>
Tuesday, 11/26 Class 18	Meet in MAD Studio, Kresge Hall 2524 Communicative focus: Versant practice	<u>Recording Assignment 4</u> Record and submit self-assessment after listening to and comparing Recording Assignments 1 and 3 <u>Canvas Quiz 5</u> Submit answers to Canvas quiz
Thursday, 11/28	NO CLASS (University Holiday: Thanksgiving)	
Tuesday, 12/3 & Thursday, 12/5	Individual Meetings & Versant Testing	<u>Writing Assignment 5</u> End-of-Quarter Reflection (<i>due Dec. 2</i>) Submit a short paragraph about how your English has improved this quarter, and plans for the future