

LINGUISTICS 481 – FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

Course Syllabus

Department of Linguistics - Simon Fraser University – Fall Semester 2003

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Course Web Page: <http://www.sfu.ca/~mtaboada/ling481/ling481.html>

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Ling 322, Ling 324, plus 6 credits of upper-level Linguistics courses.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course provides an introduction to the functional study of language. From this point of view, linguistics is the study of what language *does*, not of how it is structured. We will start by comparing formal and functional approaches to language. Then we will concentrate on one particular approach, systemic functional linguistics.

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is concerned with how language is put to use. It examines language in its cultural and social context, and studies how the structure of language has been shaped by the goals and needs of language users, i.e., it studies language as a meaning-making device. We will cover fundamental concepts in a functional approach to language, such as genre and register; metafunctions (experiential, interpersonal and textual); and the grammatical devices that are used to encode those metafunctions (systems of Transitivity, Mood and Theme).

The course will consist of lectures and in-class exercises that will focus on analysis of texts collected by the students (both spoken and written). Assignments will also analyze texts using the SFL perspective. There will be an emphasis on writing-to-learn approaches.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students will understand the functional approach to language, and will have learnt the basic constructs in systemic functional linguistics.

Assignments and final papers will involve analyses of texts from different perspectives. However, the emphasis is not on a simple identification of patterns and labelling of text structures. The ultimate goal is to be able to write a descriptive account of the analysis, and to explain how SFL tools contribute to a better understanding of language phenomena.

The course will use writing as a means of learning. Writing will consist of informal and formal assignments, some of them in-class and in groups (in-class short essays, reports, reading logs, peer evaluation, etc.). There will also be a final paper, for which a preliminary draft and an in-class presentation are required.

Note that this is neither a remedial course nor one suitable for students seeking ESL writing instruction. The course will foster the ability to write; it will not teach basic writing skills. An excellent command of the English language is expected.

REQUIRED TEXT

Eggs, Suzanne (1994) *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Continuum.

Further readings will be available on reserve in the library.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Downing, Angela and Philip Locke (2002) *A University Course in English Grammar*. London: Routledge (2nd edition).

Halliday, M.A.K. (1994) *Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold (2nd edition).

Martin, J. R., Christian Matthiessen and Clare Painter (1997) *Working with Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.

Thompson, Geoff (1996) *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time so that classes may begin promptly. Announcements will be made at the beginning and end of classes regarding the assigned readings and the expectations for exams.
2. Students are expected to have read all assigned readings *before* class. Because many students will be learning about a new field of study in this class, some of the materials and concepts may seem fairly complex. In such cases, students should read assigned readings and go over the lecture notes multiple times.
3. Students will be responsible for all materials covered in the assigned readings and lectures. Examinations will require students to refer to readings, lecture notes, and their own notes.
4. If you have to miss an in-class exam because of illness, you are required to contact me prior to the exam. You may notify me by e-mail or leave a message at the office. When you return to class, I will need a note from your medical doctor specifying the date of your absence and the reason. There is a good chance that I will call the doctor of record to confirm the note. Following departmental policy, make-up exams will not be given under any circumstances. If you have a doctor's note for the date of the exam, the weight of that exam will be added to the final exam. Unexcused absences from exams will result in a grade of zero for that exam. Further, under no circumstances will students be allowed to write the final exam early. If you have travel plans or career plans in December, you are responsible for ensuring that they do not conflict with the final examination schedule.
5. Assignments are to be submitted on the due date. Late assignments will receive a penalty of 20%. You need to notify me if your assignment is going to be late.
6. Students will be respectful of other students and the instructor. In particular, students will not talk while the instructor or another student is talking.
7. Academic dishonesty in all forms violates the basic principles of integrity and thus impedes learning. More specifically, academic dishonesty is a form of misconduct that is subject to disciplinary action and includes the following: cheating, fabrication, fraud, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. For more information on academic honesty and student conduct, please visit the following websites:
http://www.reg.sfu.ca/calendar/General_Regs.html#897900
<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>
8. Please note that students requiring accommodations as a result of a disability must contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (604-291-3112 or csdo@sfu.ca).

COURSE GRADE

The participation grade includes attending class regularly and participating actively. Other in-class activities (written questions about the reading, reading logs, reports, group work) will also count towards your participation grade.

There will be two assignments, each a short analysis of a text. The final paper is also an analysis of a text, spoken or written. The midterm and final exams will test your general knowledge of concepts and terminology learned throughout the semester, through multiple choice, short answer or short essay questions.

| | WEIGHT |
|--------------------|--------|
| Participation | 10% |
| Assignments | 15% |
| Class presentation | 10% |
| Final paper | 30% |
| Midterm exam | 20% |
| Final exam | 15% |

The following table provides a rough estimate of grade breakdowns for the final grade. Due attention will be given to the verbal descriptions listed below.

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|---------------------------|--------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 97-100% | A+ | Extraordinary performance | 73-76% | C+ | Satisfactory performance |
| 93-96% | A | Excellent performance | 69-72% | C | Marginal performance |
| 89-92% | A- | | 65-68% | C- | |
| 85-88% | B+ | Good performance | 57-64% | D | |
| 81-84% | B | | < 56% | F | Unsatisfactory performance (fail) |
| 77-80% | B- | | | | |

T O P I C S A N D R E A D I N G O U T L I N E

Unless otherwise noted, chapters are from the main textbook.

| Week | Date | Topic | Read | Hand in/Do |
|---------|----------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Week 1 | - Sept. 3 | Introduction | Chapter 1 Newmeyer | |
| Week 2 | Sept. 8 Sept. 10 | Genre | Chapter 2 | |
| Week 3 | Sept. 15 Sept. 17 | Register | Chapter 3 | |
| Week 4 | Sept. 22 Sept. 24 | Cohesion | Chapter 4 | |
| Week 5 | Sept. 29 Oct. 1 | Lexicogrammar | Chapter 5 | Assignment 1 |
| Week 6 | Oct. 6 Oct. 8 | Mood | Chapter 6 | Midterm |
| Week 7 | Oct. 13 Oct. 15 | Thanksgiving, no class Transitivity | Chapter 8 | Paper topic |
| Week 8 | Oct. 20 Oct. 22 | Theme | Chapter 9 | |
| Week 9 | Oct. 27 Oct. 29 | Systems | Chapter 7 | Assignment 2 |
| Week 10 | Nov. 3 Nov. 5 | Applications | Chapter 10 | |
| Week 11 | Nov. 10 Nov. 12 | Other functional approaches: Functional grammar | Dik | Paper, first draft Workshops |
| Week 12 | Nov. 17 Nov. 19 | Student presentations | | Presentations |
| Week 13 | Nov. 24 Nov. 26 | 'West Coast' functionalism | Noonan | |

| | | | |
|------------|---------|--------------------|-------------|
| | Nov. 28 | (Friday, 12 noon) | Final paper |
| Week 14 | Dec. 1 | Review | |
| | Dec. 3 | Final exam, 12-3pm | |

Ling 481/811 - Fall 2003 - Assignment 1
Text Analysis I
Due October 1, 2003, in class

This assignment will be your first text analysis. By text we mean any instance of written or spoken language analyzed in context. You will first collect data, and then analyze it following one or more of the analyses we have discussed so far.

Part 1: Data collection

1. Spoken

- Collect your own spoken data. Record and transcribe any instance of talk that you are involved in or witness. Remember to get the participants' permission to record and use the data for research (forms will be distributed in class).
- Use data already available. Check the course web page for lists of corpora available on-line or from the library.

2. Written

- Use any form of written text that you find. This could be an assignment or paper that you have written yourself, an ad, a legal text, a web page, a passage in a novel (which may include dialogue), etc.

The length of the text is variable, depending on the type of analysis. If you are doing a genre analysis, you might need a longer text (although some instances of a genre can also be very short). If you are doing a cohesion analysis, the text can be shorter (400-500 words). Just make sure that you have enough to analyze, and that you will be able to show overall trends or characteristics in the text. You might want to collect more than one text, and choose which one is more suitable for your analysis.

Part 2: Choose analysis type

You can analyze the text from any of the perspectives we have covered so far: generic structure, register characteristics, or cohesion. You can also combine them: a genre analysis that also considers the relationship between genre and register; a genre analysis that uses cohesion to establish the boundaries between stages, etc.

Part 3: Analyze

Perform an analysis. Study the text closely, and analyze it in full.

Part 4: Examine, summarize and discuss the analysis

Observe what the analysis tells you about the text and its context of situation and culture. Once you have figured that out, you are ready to summarize your results. See next section for suggested structure.

Structure of the assignment (suggested)

- Introduction, presentation of the data
- Main body:
 - Type of analysis chosen, and why
 - How the analysis was performed
 - Discussion of the results
- Short conclusion

- References cited
- Appendix: text or transcription
- Appendix: analysis

This can all be quite short. The main part of the assignment (introduction, body and conclusion) can all be done in two to four pages. The maximum number of pages for the assignment, excluding appendixes, is five. Feel free to use tables, charts or any other graphic aid to summarize your results.

Grading

The assignment will be graded out of a total of 100 points. It counts for 7.5% of your final grade. In grading, I will take into consideration mostly (although not exclusively) the following criteria (in more or less the following proportions):

- Choice of data, presentation and rationale – 15%
- Choice of analysis – 15%
- Discussion of the analysis – 30%
- Conclusions – 20%
- Clarity of explanation, grammar, style – 20%

Ling 481/811 - Fall 2003 - Assignment 1 – Marking rubric

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Choice of data, presentation, rationale – 15% Why is the text/data interesting and worthwhile to analyze? How is it introduced? Is the source identified? How was it collected? What do you expect to find in analyzing this data? | |
| 2. Choice of analysis – 15% Why was this particular analysis chosen? How was it performed? Is the explanation clear, so that I can understand how you analysed the data, and can see that you understand how to do the analysis? Did you show your work in the appendix? | |
| 3. Discussion – 30% 3.1. Presentation Factual information. What did the analysis find? | |
| 3.2. Interpretation What does the analysis mean? What does it tell about the text? Was the choice of analysis appropriate? What are the claims (important ideas), and are they supported by selected examples from the data? Did you go beyond description and do a critical interpretation of the data? | |
| 4. Conclusion – 20% 4.1. Summary, wrap-up of findings 4.2. Implications. What important or significant finding should you tell the reader about your analysis, is this what you expected, why or why not, what could we say about this genre and method of analysis that we didn't know before? | |
| 5. Clarity of explanation, grammar, style – 20% 5.1. Grammar basics 5.2. Argumentation and presentation 5.3. Is the style appropriate for the research genre? Does it use examples from the data? Is it structured as a research article? | |
| Total | |

Ling 481/811 - Fall 2003 - Assignment 2
Text Analysis II
Due October 29, 2003, in class

This assignment contains exactly the same instructions as Assignment 1. Follow a similar process of collecting, analyzing and describing data. The only difference is that you now have more types of analyses to apply: Mood, Transitivity and Theme. You may still do an analysis based on the previous topics.

Part 1: Data collection

Follow the same instructions as for Assignment 1. Remember that functional linguistics emphasizes the analysis of naturally-occurring data. That means written data that you find in your everyday life (including texts that have been heavily edited) or spoken data reproduced from recordings taken during the interaction.

You can certainly use data from other languages, or compare another language to English. In that case, bear in mind that you need to provide the original data, and a translation.

The length of the text is variable, depending on the type of analysis. The Mood, Transitivity and Theme analyses involve a segmentation at the clause level, and therefore you will have to analyze every single clause. Take that into account when you choose your text. Make sure that you have enough to analyze, and that you will be able to show overall trends or characteristics in the text. You might want to collect more than one text, and select one that is suitable for your analysis.

Part 2: Choose analysis type

You can analyze the text from any of the perspectives we have covered so far: generic structure, register characteristics, cohesion, Mood, Transitivity or Theme. You can also combine them: a genre analysis that also considers the relationship between genre and register; a genre analysis that examines Participants and Processes, etc.

Part 3: Analyze

Perform an analysis. Study the text closely, and analyze it in full.

Part 4: Examine, summarize and discuss the analysis

Observe what the analysis tells you about the text and its context of situation and culture. Once you have figured that out, you are ready to summarize your results. See next section for suggested structure.

Structure of the assignment (suggested)

- Introduction, presentation of the data
- Main body:
 - Type of analysis chosen, and why
 - How the analysis was performed
 - Discussion of the results
- Short conclusion
- References cited
- Appendix: text or transcription
- Appendix: analysis

This can all be quite short. The main part of the assignment (introduction, body and conclusion) can all be done in two to four pages. The maximum number of pages for the assignment, excluding appendixes, is five. Feel free to use tables, charts or any other graphic aid to summarize your results.

Grading

The assignment will be graded out of a total of 100 points. It counts for 7.5% of your final grade. In grading, I will take into consideration mostly (although not exclusively) the following criteria (in more or less the following proportions):

- Choice of data, presentation and rationale – 15%
- Choice of analysis – 15%
- Discussion of the analysis – 30%
- Conclusions – 20%
- Clarity of explanation, grammar, style – 20%

Please also note that the grading will be more strict, and I will pay more attention to those aspects that have been discussed in class, or that I pointed out in your previous assignment. Feel free to drop by during office hours if you are unclear about how to incorporate the suggestions and instructions provided.

Ling 481/811 - Fall 2003

Final Paper

Final draft due Friday, November 28, 12 noon

The final paper is a longer version of your assignments. You should follow the same procedures with regard to data collection and analysis. The only difference is that the data sample should be longer, more substantial or representative, and the discussion more extensive and focused.

You should have a topic by now. Please come and see me if you are still not sure about how to proceed. Remember that you can choose any of the analysis types we have discussed, or a combination of them, and that analyses involving more than one language or more than one genre are always welcome.

The paper has three parts:

- First draft.

A first draft that you have to bring to class on Monday, November 10. We will set up groups of students that will work together. Papers will be swapped, in preparation for the workshops.

Workshops will take place on Wednesday, November 12. You should come to class having read your fellow student's paper, and having prepared a feedback form for him/her. During class, you will discuss the feedback that you have given, and the feedback that you have received. This should prepare you to work towards a final version.

For this part: bring to class **two** copies of your paper, one for your fellow student, and one for me. You should also keep a copy for yourself.

- Oral presentation

Once you have studied the feedback, you should be ready to present your paper in class. Presentations will take place during the week of November 17.

Presentations should be brief, 15-20 minutes maximum. You can make use of any visual aids that you find necessary. A handout is highly recommended. In class, we will discuss the most appropriate format for a handout. Students will be asked to provide feedback on the presentations.

- Final paper

The final paper should be a very polished version of your first draft, which clearly shows that all the feedback has been taken into account. Due November 28.

Format (for written version)

Follow a format similar to the one we used for the assignments. Attach any data, transcription conventions or supporting analyses. Provide all the references for the sources you use, according to a standard format, such as MLA, APA, or *Language*.

Length: for undergraduate students, approximately 3,000 to 5,000 words. Depending on the font and margins you use, that usually amounts to between 12 and 15 pages. For graduate students, anywhere from 4,000 and up. Please include the word count on the cover page (most word processors will do that for you). The word count refers exclusively to the main body of the paper; it should not include any data, analysis, or transcription conventions.

How to turn your paper in

Please hand in an electronic copy and a paper copy. The electronic copy may be submitted to a plagiarism detection software system.

- Electronic copy: send the entire paper as an attachment, before 12 noon on November 28.
- Hard copy. Please hand it in also before 12 noon on November 28 to my office in Linguistics (RCB 9202). If I am not in my office, please hand it to Liz Straker at the Linguistics General Office (RCB 9201).

To the paper copy, please attach your first draft and the feedback sheets you have received (for your draft and for your presentation), so that I can follow the changes from the first draft to the final version.

Grading

The first draft will not be graded formally. I will read it and provide feedback, if I think any is needed. The presentation will be graded based on content, and on your ability to present the material. It will count for 10% of your final grade (different for graduate students).

The final paper will be graded out of a total of 100 points. It counts for 30% of your final grade. In grading, I will take into consideration mostly (although not exclusively) the following criteria, in more or less the following proportions. I will also take into account the improvements from the first draft. The categories, and the proportions, might vary depending on the type of paper (e.g., a mostly theoretical paper will carry less weight on the analysis part):

- Choice of data, presentation and rationale – 15%
- Choice of analysis – 15%
- Discussion of the analysis – 30%
- Conclusions – 20%
- Clarity of explanation, grammar, style – 20%

Ling 481/811 - Fall 2003 – Maite Taboada
Guide to Reading First Drafts

The purpose of responding to other writers is to help them write a better paper. At the same time, reading other people's papers will help you think more carefully about your own, and about how it is received by its readers. This guide will help you read the paper, and will help you write a Peer Review Worksheet.

Before the peer-review workshop

1. Read the draft carefully.
2. On the paper, use a straight line or a check mark on the margin to point to places where you think the author was successful in conveying his/her ideas, presenting an argument, or presenting data.
3. Use a wavy line to signal places where you find yourself wondering what the author meant, or where you have to stop and re-read.
4. You can write specific comments on the paper. The comments should be constructive, and reflect your thinking about the paper (see below for examples).
5. Complete a Peer Review Worksheet for each paper.

| Instead of | Say something like |
|--|---|
| <i>This is an ungrammatical sentence</i> | <i>This sentence makes me stop because... I've read this sentence twice because...</i> |
| <i>This is the wrong word</i> | <i>I don't really know what this word means. I think the word here maybe should be "x".</i> |
| <i>No transition</i> | <i>I'm having a hard time making a connection between this paragraph and the previous one.</i> |

During the writing workshop

1. Go over the Peer Review Worksheets for each paper. Each reader should explain his/her responses.
2. As a group, discuss the similarities or differences in the feedback. Do both readers raise similar comments and concerns?
3. Give the writer opportunity to respond and to ask questions.
4. Rather than simply identifying passages that need revision, readers should work with the writer to try to clarify/reorganize passages that the writer wants help with.

Please keep in mind

1. Be respectful of each other's ideas and effort. Sharing work with others is not easy. Don't make it harder by engaging in unnecessary criticism.

2. Try to go past the grammar, or problems with the grammar, and understand what the writer is trying to say. Help each other formulate clearer ideas.
3. In your Peer Review Worksheet, be sure to provide specific examples from the essay to back up your comments.

Revising the draft after the workshop

Remember that revising is not just editing. You should go over any problems with the language that your peer editors found, but the most important aspect is to make your paper clearer, more focused, and better organized.

Go over the Peer Review Worksheets for your paper. Try to answer the questions raised there, and take the comments into account.

Examine each paragraph in your paper, and make sure that it has a clear focus. Also make sure that it has some cohesive relation (remember conjunctive relations!) with the previous paragraph(s).

Source: Adapted from a handout for History 326 by Dr. Paige Raibmon and from Giltrow, J. (2003) *Academic Writing: Writing and Reading in the Disciplines*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

Writer:

Editor:

1. What is the main focus of the paper?
2. What data were used for the analysis? How was the analysis performed?
3. What are the strengths of the paper? Which parts of the argument are convincingly presented? Which part of the discussion makes good use of data, results, or sources?

4. What parts of the paper need more elaboration, support, and/or evidence? Please be specific.

5. List two specific changes that you think the writer might make to improve the next draft.

Ling 481/811 - Presentation Feedback Sheet

Presenter _____ **Evaluator** _____

- 1) Was the main focus of the research communicated? What was the main idea?
- 2) How well did the presentation integrate the theory of the course? Was there a link between the presentation and important concepts from the course?
- 3) Did you understand the rationale for the methodology and analysis? Would you have chosen another methodology? Why?
- 4) List at least two new things that you learned from this presentation.
- 5) List at least two further suggestions toward improving the research paper.
- 6) Evaluation of presentation. List at least two things that were successful about the presentation. List at least one suggestion that you wished had been included.
- 7) Quality of presentation:
 - a). Handout – was it understandable, relevant and useful?
 - b). Presentation Aids: evaluate the use of overheads or other technology.
 - c). Organization of presentation: coherence, timing.
 - d). Oral presentation: Clarity, engagement and interest.

Ling 481/811: Functional Linguistics - Fall 2003

Research Journal

As part of this course, you will keep a reading/research journal in which you explore the readings, and your own research ideas. The purpose of the journal is not to improve your writing skills (at least directly), but to stimulate thinking about issues, questions, and problems raised by your study of functional linguistics. For the most part, you will be rewarded for the process of thinking, rather than for the end product. The kind of writing you will be doing is called “exploratory” or “writing-to-learn” writing—that is, writing that lets you “think out loud on paper” without having to worry whether your writing is going to be formally evaluated. Therefore, such features of formal writing as organization, correct sentence structure neatness, and spelling will not matter in your journal. However, since I am reading them to see how you making connections about meaning and content, the entries should be legible.

Journal writing of this type can help many students become more productive and more focused thinkers. It is also similar to the process followed by graduate students and scholars in order to organize readings, explore research questions, and carry out research.

How to organize your journal

The best way is to create a new entry for a new topic, as we cover them in class: introduction, genre, register, cohesion, etc. As you do the reading, write down what you think are key ideas. You could also write down what you don’t understand at that point. For instance, instead of (or on top of) underlining key concepts in your textbook, you could write them down on your journal. For example, you could begin to generate questions that could be answered or explored in class. As the semester progresses, you could note how certain topics/ideas relate to your research topic and begin to formulate research questions. This way, the research journal will provide a useful record to assist you in reflecting upon, and recognising connections that you have made with course material throughout the semester.

After we have covered the topic in class, and while you are doing exercises on that topic, or after the exercises, you could go back to your journal and check whether your questions have been answered, whether you have changed your understanding of a particular aspect, and whether you might consider doing further research on this topic (for an assignment, or for your final paper). For this type of work, it may be useful to divide your page in two columns: one for the original reading, and another one for further additions, corrections, clarifications (see the example on the next page).

I will also ask you sometimes, after class, to write down what you have learned in the class, or to answer a brief question. You should write the answers on the journal.

Where to write your journal

You can write on a notebook, or on sheets of paper collected in a binder. You will need to keep it in some sort of order (by topic, or alphabetical).

Grading of your journal

The main purpose of the journal is to get you to develop your ideas through writing. Therefore, I will not mark it based on how well you write, or on how well you develop your ideas. But I would like to make sure everybody is doing it, and to that end I will collect them every now and then throughout the semester. I will let you know when I would like to see it. You will get credit for doing it, regardless of its quality. Of course, it has to show evidence that you are thinking seriously about the readings and the lectures. The credit will count towards your participation grade.

Example of a double-entry journal

| Genre – Week 2 | |
|--|---|
| <p>Here you can write as you do the reading.</p> <p>Sept. 5 <i>Genre is a purposeful, staged, goal-oriented activity.</i></p> <p><i>I'm not sure I understand what "staged" means. Performed on a stage? Happens in stages?</i></p> <p>...</p> | <p>Here you can write later on: after the lecture, after the exercises, when you study for the exam.</p> <p>Sept. 10 <i>Yeah, "staged" means that genres develop in steps (schematic structure). Some are obligatory. Some optional. We saw that narratives always have Orientation, Complication and Resolution. Sometimes there is an Evaluation too. They use the funny symbol ^ to indicate the order.</i></p> <p>Sept. 18 <i>I think I'll study an advertising text for my ass. 1. Maybe more than one type of advertising genre? <u>Look for examples.</u></i></p> <p>...</p> |

Adapted from: Bean, John C. (2001) *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ling. 481 Journal assignment: Reader and writer response between two common university genres - a marked student paper and instructor feedback commentary.

One of the most unrecognized but dynamic relationships between students and instructors occurs in the marking genres. The marking genres are largely unrecognized and very time consuming forms of academic writing and direct teaching. For instructors they may represent forms of highly engaged dialogue as the instructor may be assuming that the learning situation is continuing as student writers read written comments. Typically however, many students believe the learning has finished because they have finished writing the paper. Therefore once students get their graded assignments they largely ignore the written commentary because it is too late to change the assignment. As a result, students do not improve their writing strategies and instructors become frustrated because they assume that students are “not listening” to instructor’s comments.

The task for this journal entry is to do a reflection on the links between the student genre (your recently marked essay) and the feedback genre of the instructor (feedback rubric and written comments on your paper). The purpose of the task is to assist the student writer in making the connections between the instructor feedback as a way to improve on the genre of “learning from written comments.” The other purpose of the task is to ensure that students have understood the feedback and comments on the paper and can identify concrete areas for improvement in the next assignments. Finally, students’ responses to effectiveness of her commentary can assist the instructor in clarifying future comments so they are more useful for students.

1. Look over your essay and read the comments in the body of the essay and the feedback guidelines provided by your instructor.
2. Make notes of where you can see the paper has been successful (check marks and comments) and or where the paper received positive feedback. Describe the strengths of the paper according to your interpretation of the commentary.
3. Make notes where the paper needs improvement. Try to make the connections between the sections and the commentary - describe the areas of the paper that need improvement and what you can do to change them.
4. Finally, make notes if you don’t understand what a comment means – or how it relates to the essay. This is where you might identify an area that needs attention in a class workshop or in consultation with the instructor.
5. Write a one page or so summarizing the links between these two genres. Mention anything that you have observed in your reactions to these comments, how has this process has helped identify concrete steps for revising the paper, and what features of the linguistic research paper genre you would like discussed more in class.