VT25 Course Report for EN841C, The Building Blocks of English: Sounds and Words (module)

Bakgrundsinformation

Kursens namn: **English and learning: Language and assessment of language ability (Sounds and Words Module)**
Termin: **VT25**
Ladokkod: **EN841C**
Kursansvarig: **Damon Tutunjian**
Antal registrerade studenter: **13**
Antal studenter som besvarat den summativa kursvärderingen: **2/13 (15%)**

Genomförande	Sätt X
Föregående kursrapport är kommunicerad i samband med kursstart	X
Tidig dialog om förväntningar på kursen	X
Formativ kursvärdering	
Summativ kursvärdering	X
Återkoppling till studenterna	X

Utvärderingsformer

Sunet survey: Fourteen questions using open ended questions and/or a 6-point scale (1 = “Not at all” to 6 “To a very high degree” (note that item 12 uses a 5-point scale) targeting: 1) achievement of learning outcomes, 2) support from learning activities towards outcomes, 3) meeting expectations, 4) opportunity to take responsibility for own learning 5) success of own work and approach to work, 6) improvement for own approach, 7) organization planning, 8) clarity and informativeness of instructor lectures, 9) clarity and informativeness of instructor feedback, 10) quality of the course literature, 11) overall workload, 12) hours per week spent on the course module, 13) main strengths of the module 14), suggested improvements for the module.

Sammanfattning av studenternas kursvärderingar

In a Sunet evaluation of our course module, two students responded to questions about the course. Means (SD) and comments are presented in Table 1 below, when applicable:

Table 1.

Responses by question (scale 1-6 except 12, which is 1-5)

Question	Mean (SD)
1	4.5 (2.1)
2	4.0 (2.8)
3	4.0 (2.8)

4	6.0 (0.0)
7	3.5 (3.5)
8	4.0 (2.8)
9	5.0 (1.4)
10	3.0 (2.8)
11	4.5 (0.7)
12	2.0 (1.4)

One student rated the course extremely high across parameters.

One student rated it extremely low.

The student that rated the course high stated that: “It was nice to find a clear alignment between the reading, the lectures and the assignments… the alignment between the assigned reading, the lectures and the assessment tasks was clear. The lectures were both well structured but had room for student-led discussions on areas that were unclear or interesting. The feedback given on each submission was also much more detailed than we usually get… The detailed feedback on every submission was helpful to further our development.”

The student that rated it high did however note that “the level and pace of the lectures was suited for those of us who had studied phonology and morphology before already. Many of those who were at more of a beginner level seems to have found the pace overwhelming. It's worth noting though that I thought Tritch Yoshida's book covered the basics in very accessible layman's terms.”

This student also made some suggestions for change including 1) spending more time on key concepts and including more scaffolding, 2) including more L2 perspectives to the presentation, and 3) removing the manuscript requirement.

The student that rated it low stated that there was “Very poor communication between teachers of the two parts of the course. Unclear expectations of the tasks” and suggested that the instructor “listen to the students. (and include) More hands-on exercises. Clearer instructions of tasks.”

Sammanfattning av lärarlagets utvärdering, analys, and åtgärdsplan

The response rate was unfortunately very low, so these comments cannot be taken to be representative of the class. But it can be said that one student seemed to be pleased with the class (consistently marking the highest ratings) and that the other was very displeased with the class There is thus not much evidence on which to base any major changes.

I will however note the following:

1) The linguistic content of this course is comparable in content, level, and demands to the phonology and morphology components from a first-year, undergraduate introduction to linguistics course (with the addition of the L2 teaching perspective). Some years, 1-2 students complain that the content is too easy and not challenging enough. Some years 1-2 students complain that it is too difficult. In all years, the response rate to the evaluation form has been exceedingly low, and yet overall, most students have responded on the positive end of the scale (this course typically receives high ratings). I thus have very little data on which to base any changes, and the data that does exist across terms does not support making substantial changes.
2) A great deal of scaffolding was provided for both the phonetics learning (multiple home worksheets and in-class practice, plus opportunities for students to ask questions about home-learned elements), as well as the corpus work. Please see our resource-rich Canvas page, schedule of activities, and the lecture slides.
3) Students were notified in-class that I would add a second group practice seminar on demand. I made this quite clear. I have booked these in the past and no one has shown up, so I left it to the students to make the request. No one emailed me for that extra seminar. Some students did however email for advice on specific questions, and they all received prompt, detailed replies. In short, the opportunities were there if you chose to take them.
4) Extremely detailed instructions for both of my tasks plus a weighted, detailed rubric outlining expectations as well as example papers and example research projects can be found on our Canvas page. The tasks were also explained at length in class. Hundreds of students have successfully completed these tasks.
5) It was made clear at the onset of the class that the two learning modules are not related. The

artificial combination of unrelated content is purely an artifact of KSM/LS directives. I have no say in this. If you take issue with this policy, please complain to your student union.

6) Students were informed that the manuscript could comprise the same bullet points from their power point with some filling in of gaps. You can export the PPTX to Word right from Powerpoint. I do need an entrance ticket so that I know students are prepared for the presentation and so that I can have some idea in advance of the presentation of what it will cover, and it is quite common in our department to require a manuscript in advance. So, this will not change.
7) I can understand the complaint about L1/L2 balance in terms of the morphology component. I have been thinking of switching to a better book in that regard. As I see it, the Phonology component is nearly completely L2-focused (case in point: the Lingua Franca Core focus of that component). Thus, I do not see much to change there.
8) I encourage you all to respond to evaluation forms in future courses. We cannot make informed changes to the syllabus on the basis of a 15 percent response rate.

.

Förslag till revidering av kursplan

No suggestions for changes at this time apart from looking into changing morphology textbooks.

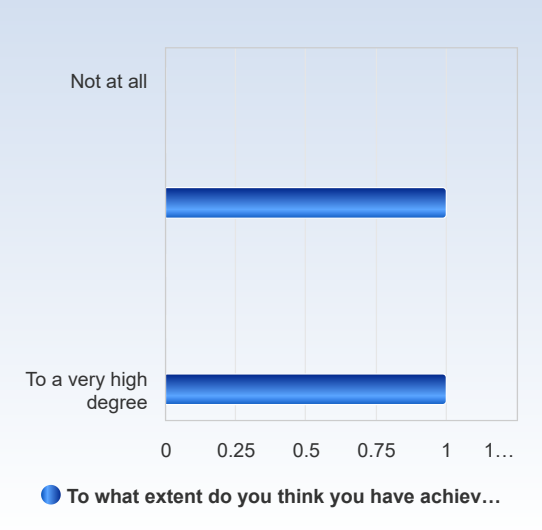
.

VT25 EN841C Sounds and Words

Answer Count: 2

1 To what extent do you think you have achieved the learning outcomes for the Sounds and Words component of the course?

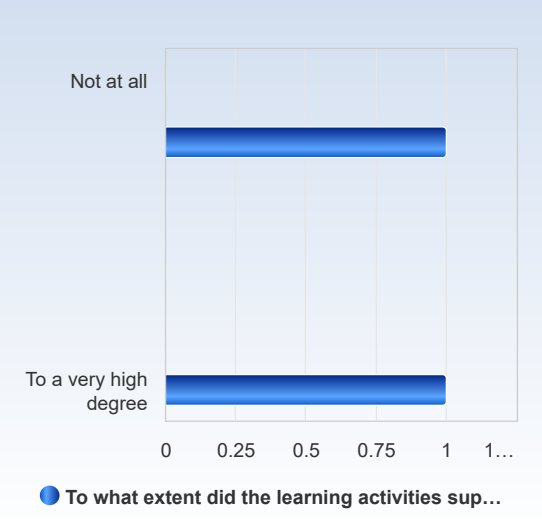
To what extent do you think you have achieved the learning outcomes for the Sounds and Words component of the course?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)



	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent do you think you have achieved the learning outcomes for the Sounds and Words component of the course?	4.5	2.1	47.1 %	3.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	6.0

2 To what extent did the learning activities support your efforts to achieve the learning outcomes in this component of the course?

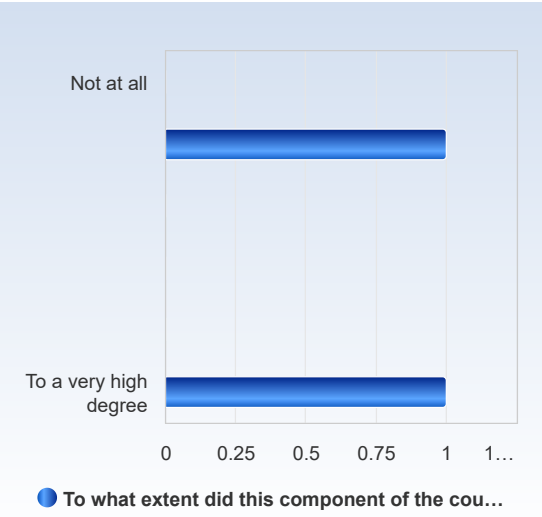
To what extent did the learning activities support your efforts to achieve the learning outcomes in this component of the course?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)



	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent did the learning activities support your efforts to achieve the learning outcomes in this component of the course?	4.0	2.8	70.7 %	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	6.0

3 To what extent did this component of the course unit meet your expectations?

To what extent did this component of the course unit meet your expectations?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)

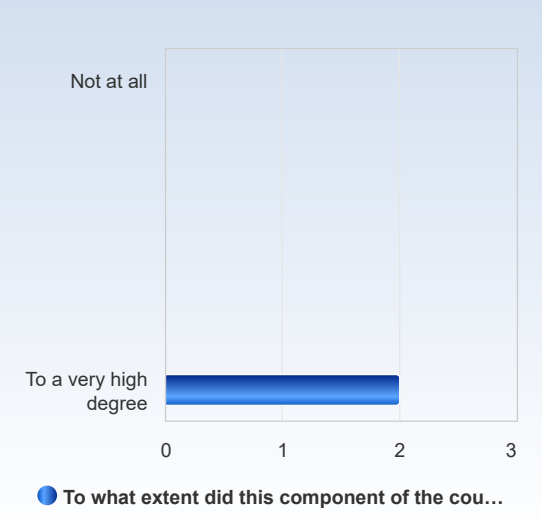


	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent did this component of the course unit meet your expectations?	4.0	2.8	70.7 %	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	6.0

Comment
I would have been beneficial for the teacher to provide som more hands-on support in regards to the Corpus-tool. And to guide the teaching in accordance with the problems the students had instead of only showing prepared material.

4 To what extent did this component of the course give you the opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning?

To what extent did this component of the course give you the opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	2 (100.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)



	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent did this component of the course give you the opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning?	6.0	0.0	0.0 %	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0

5 What about your own work and approach to learning do you feel was most successful when completing this component of the course?

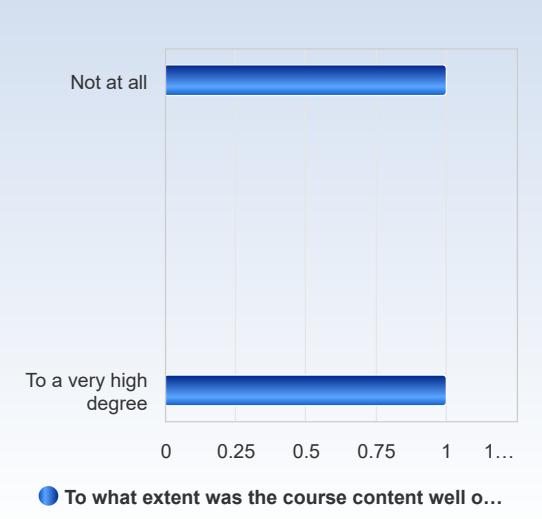
What about your own work and approach to learning do you feel was most successful when completing this component of the course?
Making sure to show up to lectures, engaging in the discussions and taking extensive notes served me well.

6 What about your own work or approach to the material could you have improved?

What about your own work or approach to the material could you have improved?
I missed out on participating in the peer review part of the first submission because I got sick. If I would have paced my writing better though, getting sick wouldn't have affected my submission as much. In short, I should try not to leave things until they're quite so close to their deadlines.

7 To what extent was the course content well organized and well planned?

To what extent was the course content well organized and well planned?	Number of responses
Not at all	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)

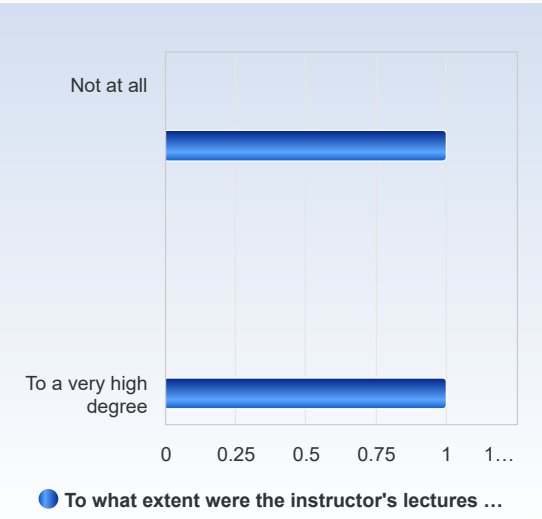


	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent was the course content well organized and well planned?	3.5	3.5	101.0 %	1.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	6.0

Comment
It was nice to find a clear alignment between the reading, the lectures and the assignments.
Very poor communication between teachers of the two parts of the course. Unclear expectations of the tasks.

8 To what extent were the instructor's lectures clear and informative?

To what extent were the instructor's lectures clear and informative?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)

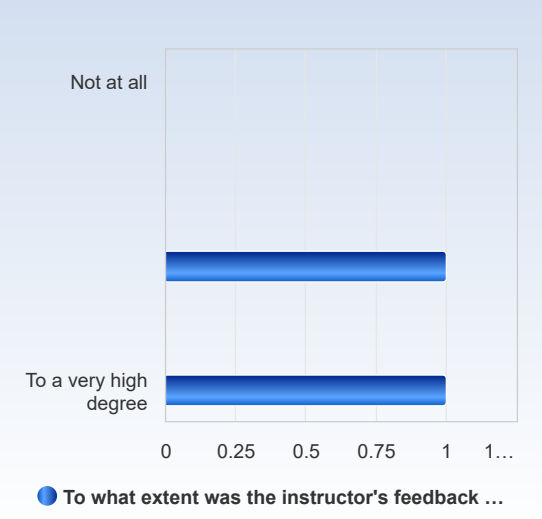


	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent were the instructor's lectures clear and informative?	4.0	2.8	70.7 %	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	6.0

Comment
From speaking to my course mates though, I think the level and pace of the lectures was suited for those of us who had studied phonology and morphology before already. Many of those who were at more of a beginner level seems to have found the pace overwhelming. It's worth noting though that I thought Tritch Yoshida's book covered the basics in very accessible layman's terms.

9 To what extent was the instructor's feedback clear and informative?

To what extent was the instructor's feedback clear and informative?	Number of responses
Not at all	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
To a very high degree	1 (50.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)

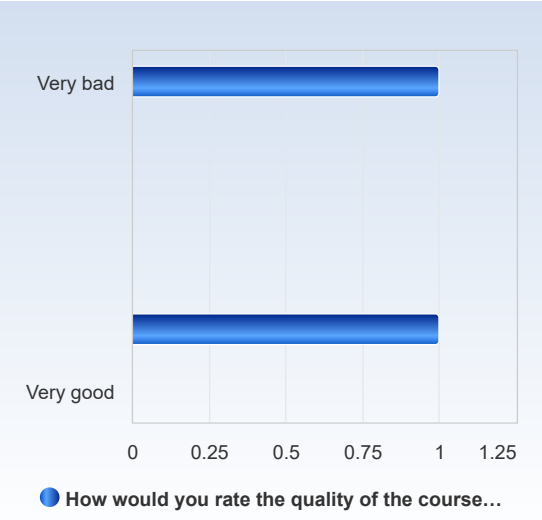


	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
To what extent was the instructor's feedback clear and informative?	5.0	1.4	28.3 %	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	6.0

Comment
The detailed feedback on every submission was helpful to further our development.

10 How would you rate the quality of the course literature used in this component of the course?

How would you rate the quality of the course literature used in this component of the course?	Number of responses
Very bad	1 (50.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
Very good	0 (0.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)

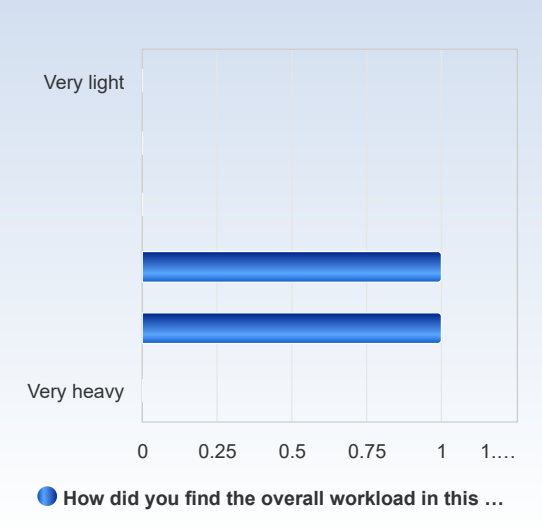


	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
How would you rate the quality of the course literature used in this component of the course?	3.0	2.8	94.3 %	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0

Comment
Reading Quigley made me want to gouge my eyes out just from how 'waffley' it was written. It did serve its purpose though in giving a real-world perspective to language teaching.

11 How did you find the overall workload in this component of the course?

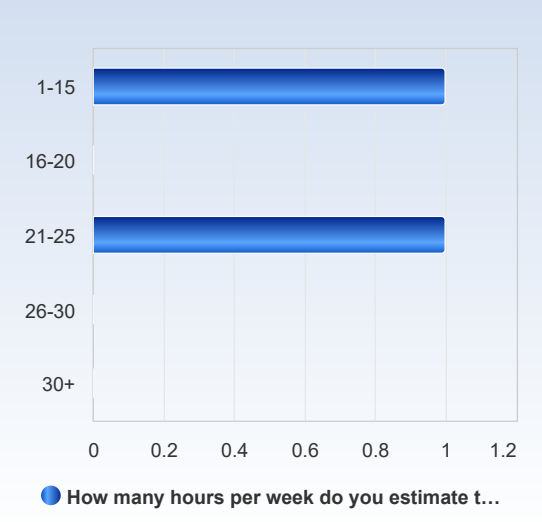
How did you find the overall workload in this component of the course?	Number of responses
Very light	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	0 (0.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
	1 (50.0%)
Very heavy	0 (0.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)



	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
How did you find the overall workload in this component of the course?	4.5	0.7	15.7 %	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	5.0

12 How many hours per week do you estimate that you spent on this component of the course?

How many hours per week do you estimate that you spent on this component of the course?	Number of responses
1-15	1 (50.0%)
16-20	0 (0.0%)
21-25	1 (50.0%)
26-30	0 (0.0%)
30+	0 (0.0%)
Total	2 (100.0%)



	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation	Min	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Max
How many hours per week do you estimate that you spent on this component of the course?	2.0	1.4	70.7 %	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0

13 Please sum up the main strengths of this component of the course.

Please sum up the main strengths of this component of the course.
As stated above, the alignment between the assigned reading, the lectures and the assessment tasks was clear. The lectures were both well structured but had room for student-led discussions on areas that were unclear or interesting. The feedback given on each submission was also much more detailed than we usually get.
Interesting to learn about pronunciation and Morphology

14 What suggestions do you have for improving this component of the course?

What suggestions do you have for improving this component of the course?
As I mentioned above, from what I have heard from classmates, many found the level and the pace of this course to be overwhelming. Potentially more time could be spent in the beginning to establish familiarity with key concepts and some foundational knowledge. Perhaps some scaffolding questions/seminar-discussions regarding our reading of Tritch Yoshida in the beginning could help ensure that everyone is locked in before moving ahead to more in depth areas. Also, I found there to be a tendency to look at English through an L1-perspective in the lectures and the reading material (apart from the LFC-material that is) even though the assessment tasks themselves were geared to focus on an L2/EFL perspective. Perhaps some reading material could be added that focuses specifically on the L2/EFL perspective that most of us teachers have and that most of our students will have. It felt strange to not at all mention transfer issues/benefits regarding phonology and morphology between Swedish and English. Even to students who have Swedish as a second language, knowing and comparing the phonology between the two languages could be beneficial as we know that every student in Sweden studies and develops both languages while at school here. Lastly, the final assessment task felt unnecessarily time-consuming in its production to a certain degree. Since we were to submit both a word-for-word manuscript and then present orally, we ended up having to make three versions of the same assignment. One manuscript to submit to you, a second manuscript in bullet points that could actually be used during the presentation and finally the presentation itself. Unless the word-for-word manuscript gives you invaluable insight, perhaps allowing for a bullet-point form manuscript to be submitted could be considered.
Listen to the students. More hands-on exercises. Clearer instructions of tasks.