

# Brett Reynolds

*Professor of ESL and TESL  
& Adjunct Professor of  
Linguistics*

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## Positions

- 2003–Present **Professor of English for Academic Purposes and TESL**,  
Humber Polytechnic
- 2024–Present **Adjunct Professor of Linguistics**, University of Toronto, Toronto,  
ON
- 2025 **Visiting Professor (Visiting Faculty Program)**, Rosenheim Technical  
University of Applied Sciences, Rosenheim, Germany
- 1996–2003 **EFL Instructor**, Sakuragaoka Girls' Jr. & Sr. High School, Tokyo,  
Japan
- 1993–1996 **EFL Instructor**, Den House Language School, Tokyo, Japan

## Professional Service

- 2023–Present **Special Issue Editor**, *Journal of Linguistics*
- 2023 **Reviewer**, *English Today*
- 2022 **Reviewer**, *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, Wiley
- 2018–Present **Reviewer**, *TESL EJ*, Top 10 Award for quality and timeliness in 2024
- 2017–Present **Ethics Reviewer**, TESL Ontario
- 2016–Present **Proofreader**, *Language Science Press*, Gold proofreader <https://langsci-press.org/halloffame>
- 2011–2019 **Editor**, *Contact*, TESL Ontario's quarterly magazine
- 2016–2018 **Assistant Editor**, *TESL EJ*
- 2011 **Vocabulary Consultant**, Abax Tokyo, Japan
- 2009–2016 **Editorial Review Board Member**, *TESOL Journal*

- 2026–Present **Member**, *Centre for Systems Research Advisory Committee*, Humber Polytechnic
- 2006–Present **Bureaucrat**, *Simple English Wiktionary*  
**Administrator**, *English Wiktionary*  
**Editor**, *English Wikipedia*
- 2009–2012 **Proposal Reviewer**, TESOL Conference
- 2005–2006 **Vocabulary Consultant**, Longman ELT
- 2000–2003 **High School Section Editor**, *ETJ Journal*  
**Editorial Advisory Board Member**, *The Language Teacher*, JALT's monthly journal  
**Editorial Advisory Board Member**, *JALT Conference Proceedings*
- 1999–2003 **Proposal Reading Committee Member**, *JALT Conference*

## Education

- 2014–2016 **Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics**, University of Edinburgh (incomplete)
- 2007 **Graduate Certificate in TESL**, Humber College, Toronto, ON
- 2004 **Certificate in Adult Education**, Humber College, Toronto, ON
- 1998–2000 **M.Ed. in TESOL**, Temple University, Tokyo, Japan, Multiple language-testing and assessment courses.
- 1988–1991 **B.A. in Administrative and Commercial Studies**, University of Western Ontario, London, ON

## Certification & Accreditation

Ethical conduct for research involving Humans - Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)

TESL-Ontario accredited as TESL Trainer for Theory Instructor and Methodology Instructor

## Coding

- Programming (research support) R and Python: comfortable assembling analyses, debugging, and extending workflows with online/AI support.
- L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X** Proficient

## Languages

- English C2+
- Japanese B2 Verbally proficient, intermediate reading and writing ability; level 2 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Exam
- French B1
- Spanish A2
- Italian A2

## Popular writing

- 2023–Present Multiple articles for *Mental Floss* <https://www.mentalfloss.com/authors/brett-reynolds>
- 2006–2014 *English Jack* (roughly 800 posts). <http://english-jack.blogspot.com>

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## Academic publications

### In preparation

Independent relative *whose*: From syntactic gap to pragmatic constraint.

Grammaticality de-idealized: Rethinking grammaticality through language use and community practice

Grammar and emergence with Ryan Nefdt

Grammaticality as Kind: Ontology, Epistemology, and Empirical Pay-off with James T. M. Miller

Introduction to special issue. *Journal of Linguistics*, with Ryan Nefdt, Christopher Potts, and James Donaldson

*Words That Won't Hold Still: Grammatical Categories as Natural Kinds* – a book on the philosophy of grammatical categories (12 chapters drafted)

\**(Un)grammatical: How grammar works* – a trade book (back burner)

### Submitted manuscripts and preprints

- Under review Misuse of linguistic evidence in a study of media bias, with Geoff Pullum. *Journal of Language and Politics* Jul 1, 2025. Preprint at <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/008961>.
- Personhood and pro-forms: A hierarchical analysis of gender in Modern English. *Folia Linguistica* Dec 24, 2025.
- Focus modification and interrogative heads. *Glossa* Dec 23, 2025.
- Noticing language: What echolocation tells us about language emergence. *Evolutionary Linguistic Theory* (ELT-26001) Jan 2, 2026. Preprint at LingBuzz. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009302>
- Language landscapes: The ESL teacher's guide to how English works* – a textbook. LangSci Press
- 2026 Preprints LLMs as boundary phenomena: A comment on Nefdt (2026). Preprint at *PhilPapers*. <https://philpapers.org/rec/REYLAB>
- English kinship terms: From taboo to syntax. Under review at *Journal of English Linguistics*. Preprint at LingBuzz. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009751>
- 2025 Preprints A hyperreal model of sorites tolerance. Preprint at *PhilPapers*. <https://philpapers.org/rec/REYAHM>

Naturalizing typological kinds: Comparanda, mechanisms, and measurement. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009461>

The homeostatic maintenance of English countability: Bidirectional inference and the stability of grammatical clusters. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009537>

Definiteness and deitality in English: A homeostatic property cluster account. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009369>

Language as a stack of homeostatic property-cluster kinds: From phonemes to constructions. *Zenodo*. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17354363>. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009400>

From Checklists to Clusters: A Homeostatic Account of AGI Evaluation. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2510.15236>

Noticing language: What echolocation tells us about language emergence. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009302>

How to study boundary phenomena: English reciprocals and the limits of categorization. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/009294>

## Published

- 2026 The lexicon–syntax boundary in English numerals: Cardinals, ordinals, and fractionals. *English Language and Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1360674325100518>
- 2025 *Going + COMP Projects PP, Not AdvP: A Reply to Silvennoinen (2025)*. *English Language and Linguistics* <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1360674325100543>
- Prepositions in (English) dictionaries. *Dictionaries: Journal of the Dictionary Society of North America*. 46(1). <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/153/article/963324>
- Negation in English and other languages* by Otto Jespersen. A new edition co-edited with Peter Evans. Berlin: Language Science Press. <https://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/501>
- 2024 Why *more* and *less* are never adverbs. *Journal of Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002226724000239>. Preprint at *LingBuzz*. <https://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/007543>

Language without lessons: The promise of large language models.  
*Contact.* <https://contact.teslontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Brett.pdf>

- 2023 Unified Syntactic Annotation of English in the *CGEL* Framework. With Aryaman Arora and Nathan Schneider. *Proceedings of the 17th Linguistic Annotation Workshop*.  
<https://aclanthology.org/volumes/2023.law-1/>
- CGELBank Annotation Manual v1.2. *arXiv* preprint. With Aryaman Arora and Nathan Schneider.  
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2305.17347>
- 2022 CGELBank: *CGEL* as a framework for English syntax annotation. With Aryaman Arora and Nathan Schneider. *arXiv* preprint.  
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2210.00394>
- ODELLO* (Online free and open materials for CLB 1–4 through eCampus Ontario). <https://odello.ca/>
- A student's introduction to English grammar 2nd ed.* With Rodney Huddleston & Geoff Pullum. Cambridge University Press.
- Still against teaching collocations. *The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal* 22(1), 144–149.  
<http://www.readingmatrix.com/files/27-genf3eci.pdf>
- 2021 Quantifying the differences between lexical categories: The case of pronouns and determinatives in English. *Cadernos de Linguística*. <https://cadernos.abralin.org/index.php/cadernos/article/view/399>
- 2020 What echolocation does and doesn't mean for language. Preprint at OSF. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/h7qdr>
- 2019 Against teaching collocations. *ELT Journal* 73(2), 223–225.  
<http://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccz001>
- Treating ESL students with respect: Critical praxis. With Jeff Brown. In A. Jule (Ed.), *The compassionate educator: Understanding social issues in Canadian schools* (pp. 153–173). Toronto: Canadian Scholars.
- 2014 Determinatives again. *TESL Canada Journal* 31(2), 89–91. <http://teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl/article/view/1179/999>
- 2013 Determiners, feline marsupials, and the category–function distinction: A critique of ELT grammars. *TESL Canada Journal* 30(2), 1–17. <http://teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl/article/viewFile/1138/957>

- The intersection of mathematics and language in the post-secondary environment: Implications for English language learners. *Collected essays on teaching and learning*, 6. With J. Choi, R. Milburn, P. Marcoccia, P. J. Silva, & S. Penag. <http://ojs.uwindsor.ca/ojs/leddy/index.php/CELT/article/view/3709>
- The exercise is not the game: Some misunderstanding about writing academic English. *Share (TESL Canada's e-magazine)*.  
[https://www.tesl.ca/images/docs/share/share\\_4\\_2013.pdf](https://www.tesl.ca/images/docs/share/share_4_2013.pdf)
- 2012 *Oxford Modern English Grammar* by Bas Aarts (Book review). *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*.  
[https://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v9n22012/rev\\_reynolds.pdf](https://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v9n22012/rev_reynolds.pdf)
- ウィキの神話を打ち破る：ウィキが、あなたが求めているライティングの解決法になりそうもない理由 [Busting the wiki myth: Why wikis are unlikely to be the writing solution you're looking for]. In M. Jamall (ed.), 「音と映像」 [*Sound & Vision*], 69–98. Tokyo: Kazama Press. (Invited chapter).
- Introduction to the Extensive Reading Foundation Online Self-Placement Test. Extensive Reading World Congress Proceedings, 1, 23–25. With Lemmer, R., Brierley, M., & Waring, R. <http://erfoundation.org/proceedings/erwc1-Lemmer-Brierley-Reynolds-Waring.pdf>
- 2011 The myth of FANBOYS: Coordination, commas, and college composition classes. *TESL Canada Journal* 29(1), 104–112. <http://www.teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl/article/view/1092/911>
- 2010 Chunking: Another perspective. *Visual Thesaurus*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20210610025837/https://www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/teachersatwork/chunking-another-perspective/>
- 2009 *Communication Spotlight: Speaking strategies and Listening Skills: Starter*. With A. Graham-Marr, D. Moran & S. McNeese. Tokyo: Abax.
- 2008 *Foundations Reading Library, Level 7: Activity Book*. R. Waring & M. Jamall (Eds.). Boston: Heinle.  
*Foundations Reading Library, Level 5: Lesson Planner*. R. Waring & M. Jamall (Eds.). Boston: Heinle.
- 2007 *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Scientific Research to Practice* (Review). *TESL Canada Journal* 24(2), 137–138. <http://teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl/article/view/142/142>
- 2003 Grading: by what criteria? *English Teachers in Japan Journal* 4(1).

- Problems in Automating Brown's EFL Readability Index. *JALT Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTJJ25.2-5>
- 2002 The newest Course of Study for Middle Schools, foreign language section: What's new? *English Teachers in Japan Journal* 2(3).  
The Japanese Ministry of Education's new Course of Study (Translation from Japanese to English of sections relating to teaching foreign languages). *English Teachers in Japan Journal*, 2(3).
- Classroom behavior. *English Teachers in Japan Journal* 2(3). With Helen Uchida.
- 2000 But they can't read yet: Supporting English study while literacy develops. *English Teachers in Japan Journal*, 1(1).  
Using computer assisted language learning (CALL). *The School House* 8(2)  
Story retelling. *The School House* 8(1).
- 1999 Phonetic coding in language aptitude: Different roles for different languages. *Temple University Japan Working Papers in Applied Linguistics* 14.  
Attention to form in CALL: An action research project. *The School House* 7(1).  
Phonology: Pronunciation and beyond. *Temple University Japan Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 27. Editor.  
Promoting English phonological awareness in Japanese high school students. *Temple University Japan Studies in Applied Linguistics* 27, 8–12  
Phonological awareness in EFL reading acquisition. In A. Barfield, et al. (Eds.). *On JALT98: Focus on the classroom: Interpretations*, 152–159. Tokyo: The Japan Association for Language Teaching.  
Task-based research in SLA: A lecture by Rod Ellis (report). *The Language Teacher* 23(2).  
Open forum. *Teachers Learning with Children* 3(4), 36–38.
- 1998 Sakuragaoka Girls' Junior and Senior High. *The School House* 6(2).  
Phonemic awareness: Is it really language specific? *Literacy Across Cultures* 2(2), 9–13.
- 1997 *The Kenkyusha English-Japanese learner's pocket dictionary* (a review). *The Language Teacher* 21(4).
- 1996 TEFL labour issues in Japan. *The Language Teacher* 20(7).

## Presentations

- 2025 Degrees of wrongness: Phonological vs. morphosyntactic violations. The Montréal-Ottawa-Toronto-Hamilton Syntax Workshop (MOTH). University of Toronto.
- 2023 English language and linguistic theory: A tribute to Geoff Pullum. Conference organizer. University of Edinburgh.  
*More* and *less* are never adverbs. Presented at English language and linguistic theory: A tribute to Geoff Pullum.  
Unified Syntactic Annotation of English in the CGEL Framework. With Aryaman Arora and Nathan Schneider. Presented at The 17th Linguistic Annotation Workshop.
- 2022 AI-Generated Voices for Diversity in ESL Materials. Presented at CALL, KoTESOL, CamTESOL, TESL Nova Scotia.  
Teaching prepositions in a modern grammatical context. Presented at KoTESOL, CamTESOL, TESL Nova Scotia.  
Vocabulary for CLB 1–4. An invited workshop presented for Solomon College.  
Vocabulary for CLB 1–4. Presented for Colleges and Universities Committee Webinar Series.  
You think it's ungrammatical but it just ain't so. Presented for Colleges and Universities Committee Webinar Series.
- 2021 Teaching prepositions in a modern grammatical context. Presented at TESL Ontario.  
Extensive reading in an EAP: Part 1 failure to launch. Presented at TOSCON21. With Aileen Bach & Catherine Dunn.  
Consensus-based decision making: A task for reconciliation. Presented at the 9th International conference on second language pedagogies.
- 2020 Determinatives are far from pronouns in English. Presented at Linguistweet, ABRALIN (Brazilian Linguistics Association).  
A predisposition to notice. Presented at the 56th Linguistics Colloquium.  
English gender: Well beyond *he* and *she*. Presented at the 56th Linguistics Colloquium.
- 2019 Episode 15: Brett Reynolds. *Teacher Talking Time* (Podcast).  
Grammar myths. Presented at the REAL Conference, Ryerson University, Toronto.

- Machine translation for the next-generation university. Presented at Fontys University's International Week, Eindhoven, Netherlands.
- How to learn English faster. Presented at various Mississauga libraries.
- 2018 Enlightenment humanism and respect for ESL students. Presented at Humber Colleges Liberal Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Conference, Toronto.
- How to learn English faster. Presented at various Mississauga libraries.
- 2017 Learning a language is learning chunks. Presented at TESL Ontario, Toronto.
- How to learn English faster. Presented at the Central Library, Mississauga.
- Phonotactics: The neglected element of phonology. Presented at TESL Canada, Niagara Falls.
- Problematizing the passive voice. Presented at TESL Canada, Niagara Falls.
- Do teachers of critical thinking think especially critically? Presented at Humber College's Showcase Conference, Toronto, with John Stilla.
- 2016 The nitty gritty of *to*-infinitives. Presented at TOSCON16, Toronto.
- 2015 *Said* the overlooked English determiner. Presented at the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Ottawa for the Canadian Linguistics Association.
- 2014 The nitty gritty of relative clauses. Presented at TOSCON14, Toronto.
- Words as a measure of hope. Presented at Hope, Betrayal and Trust, 1st International Symposium, Toronto.
- The misunderstood passive voice. Presented at the College Association for Language and Literacy (CALL) Conference, Toronto.
- Of collocational babies and bathwater. Presented at TESL North York Spring Conference, North York.
- 2013 Writing for *Contact magazine*. Presented at TESL Ontario's Annual Conference, Toronto.
- The exercise is not the game: Some misunderstanding about writing academic English. Presented at TESL Toronto's Spring Conference, Toronto.
- 2012 Language literacy impacts math literacy. Presented at TESL Canada Conference, Kamloops, BC with J. Choi and R. Milburn.

The intersection of language and mathematics in the post-secondary environment: Implications for educational practices in English language learners. Presented at Humber College's Liberal Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Conference, Toronto with J. Choi and R. Milburn.

Framing the question: Implications for the ELL student. Presented at Showcase 2011, Humber College's In-house Conference with J. Choi and R. Milburn.

The intersection of mathematics and language in the post-secondary environment: Implications for educational practices in English language learners. Presented at the Ontario College Mathematics Association Conference, Orillia with J. Choi and R. Milburn.

- 2011 The what and how of vocabulary teaching and learning. Presented at TESL Ontario's Annual Conference, Toronto.

What if *Wikipedia*... Presented at Showcase 2011, Humber College's In-house Conference.

Words as a measure of hope. Presented at TEDxHumber, Toronto.

Math and the international student: How language may play a role. Presented at Ontario Colleges Mathematics Association, Orillia, Ontario with J. Choi and R. Milburn.

The what and how of vocabulary teaching and learning. Presented at TESL Toronto's Spring Conference, Toronto.

- 2010 A grammar workshop with Brett Reynolds. Presented at Toyo Gakuen University, Tokyo.

- 2009 Describing levels of literacy. Presented at the annual College Association for Language and Literacy conference, London.

More empirical grammar: Taking on the preposition. Presented at the annual North York TESL Conference.

- 2008 More empirical grammar: Taking on the preposition. Presented at the annual TESL Ontario Conference, Toronto.

Grammar: Making the connections. Presented at Showcase 2008, Humber College's in-house conference.

Best practices in grammatical description. Presented at the annual conference of the College Association for Language and Literacy, Niagara College, Niagara.

- 2007 Empirical grammar and the myth of FANBOYS: Supporting your understanding of the “rules”. Presented at the annual TESL Ontario Conference, Toronto.

The myth of FANBOYS: Commas, coordination & college composition classes. Presented at the annual conference of the College Association for Language and Literacy, Toronto.

Benchmarking the benchmarks. At the annual conference of the College Association for Language and Literacy. Panel organizer.

- 2006 ESL in higher education: Extensive reading in practice. Presented at TESOL, Tampa, March with Rob Waring.
- Nihongoban gureidido rida kaihatsu e no torikumi [Steps in the development of Japanese language graded readers]. Presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Association for Japanese Language Education, Toronto with Teruko Harada & Mihoko Yamagata.
- 2005 ESL students and vocabulary. Presented at Showcase 2005, Humber College's in-house conference.
- 2004 Extensive reading and extensive listening: Two holes in JSOL. Presented for Sensei Online's 43rd Benkyoukai (study group).
- 2002 Nihongoban gureidido rida no kaihatsu ni kansuru kisoteki kenkyu [Basic research relating to the establishment of Japanese graded readers]. Presented in Japanese at the Koide Memorial Japanese Language Teaching Conference, Tokyo, July with Teruko Harada, Taeko Miyazaki & Mihoko Yamagata.
- 2001 Japanese graded readers: Our plan and your needs. Presented at JALT 2001, Kyushu, Japan, November.
- Nihongoban gureidido rida [Japanese graded readers]. Presented in Japanese at JALT 2001, Kyushu, Japan, November with Teruko Harada, Taeko Miyazaki & Mihoko Yamagata.
- 1998 Phonological awareness in EFL reading acquisition. Presented at JALT 1998, Maebashi, Japan, November.

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## Grants

- 2011 Glossary or Dictionary: A Pilot Study for Mathematics Support. With Jean Choi and Rebecca Milburn. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Institutional Grant: \$4,966.70
- 2011 The Development of a Language Aid to Support Math Success. With Jean Choi and Rebecca Milburn. Humber College Staff Initiated Research Fund: \$7,367.20