

Linguistics 790: Second Language Acquisition
TTh 5-6:15
Humanities Classroom Building 308

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Course Overview:

This course provides an introduction to second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research. The course topics are divided into three different areas of SLA: 1) theoretical approaches to first and second language learning, 2) the external variables that affect SLA, and 3) the internal factors that affect SLA. We begin with descriptive approaches to SLA, and move toward more explanatory approaches, focusing on current theories of SLA. The overall objective of the course is to help students better understand the relationships between SLA theory, research and pedagogy as well as key terms and concepts in SLA.

Specifically, by the end of the course, students are expected to address questions on topics such as:

- 1) variables influencing SLA: social, cognitive, linguistic etc.
- 2) current theories/approaches to the study of SLA
- 3) the relationship between SLA theory and pedagogy both in ESL (K-12) and EFL contexts.

Required texts: Course packet available from Copy Pickup Inc., 1830 Rosewood Dr. (at the corner of South Gregg St.), 779-2679.

Course requirements:

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| 1) Critical review papers (4): | 40% |
| 2) Research paper | : 30% |
| 3) Reaction essays (5): | 15% |
| 4) Presentations | 15% |

Readings and Participation:

The format for this course is lecture/discussion, which means that the students are expected to discuss their understanding of the issues at every class. Thus, the assigned readings must be done **prior** to the class during which the topics are to be discussed. Active participation in the class discussion, which will help you better understand topics/issues, is encouraged.

Tentative Schedule for Readings/Discussions and Assignments (Note: The full list of references included in the course-packet is given at the end of the syllabus)

Week 1	August 19, Th	Introduction and background	
Week 2	August 24, T	The recent history of SLA research Contrastive Analysis Error Analysis Developmental patterns	Mitchell & Myles (Ch. 2)
	August 26, Th	SLA and linguistics: Typological & functional approaches Reaction Essay #1 due	Mitchell & Myles (Ch. 5) Major & Faudree (1996)
Week 3	August 31, T	SLA and linguistics: Variation Cross-linguistics influence	Romaine (2003—D&L ch. 14) Odlin (2003-- D&L ch. 15)
	September 2, Th	SLA and linguistics: Implicit vs. explicit knowledge Review paper #1 due	DeKeyser (2003-- D&L ch. 11) VanPatten & Cadierno (1993)*
Week 4	September 7, T	SLA and linguistics: Incidental vs. intentional learning	Hulstijn (2003-- D&L ch. 12) Laufer & Hulstijn (2001)*
	September 9, Th	SLA and linguistics: Stabilization and fossilization Reaction Essay #2 due	Long (2003-- D&L ch. 16)
Week 5	September 14, T	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - access to UG	White (2003-- D&L ch. 2) Bley-Vroman (1989)*
	September 16, Th	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - transfer	Vainikka & Young-Scholten (1996)*
Week 6	September 21, T	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - initial state	Schwartz & Sprouse (1996)* White (2000)*
	September 23, Th	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - steady state Reaction Essay #3 due	Hawkins (2001)* Sorace (2003-- D&L ch. 6)
Week 7	September 28, T	SLA and linguistics: - the lexicon	Kroll & Sunderman (2003-- D&L ch. 5) Libben (2000) * Paribakht & Wesche (1997)*
	September 30, Th	SLA and linguistics: - theory of mind Review paper # 2 due	Schaffer & De Villiers (2000)*
Week 8	October 5, T	SLA and linguistics: Bilingualism - language attrition	Hansen (2001)* Sorace (2003)* Bolonyai (2002)*

	October 7, Th	SLA and sociolinguistics: Sociocultural theory	Mitchell & Myles (ch. 7) Donato & McCormick (1994)*
Week 9	October 12, T	SLA and psycholinguistics: Cognitive approaches - connectionism Reaction Essay #4 due	Ellis (2003-- D&L ch. 4)
	October 14, Th	No class – Fall Break	
Week 10	October 19, T	SLA and sociolinguistics: Pragmatics	Bardovi-Harlig (1999)*
	October 21, Th	SLA and sociolinguistics: Pragmatics Review Paper #3 due	Ellis (1994, ch. 5)
Week 11	October 26, T	Internal factors in SLA: Maturational constraints	Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson (2003-- D&L ch. 17) DeKeyser (2000)*
	October 28, Th	Internal factors in SLA: Maturational constraints Reaction Essay #5 due	Dörnyei & Skehan (2003-- D&L ch. 18)
Week 12	November 2, T	No class – General Election Day	
	November 4, Th	Internal factors in SLA: Attention and memory	Robinson (2003-- D&L ch. 19)
Week 13	November 9, T	Internal factors in SLA: Processing capacity	Pienmann (2003-- D&L ch. 20)
	November 11, Th	Internal factors in SLA: Individual differences Review Paper #4 due	Ellis (1994, ch. 11)
Week 14	November 16, T	External factors in SLA: Input, intake, output, interaction	Gass (2003-- D&L ch. 9)
	November 18, Th	External factors in SLA: Input, intake, output, interaction (continued)	VanPatten (2000)* Swain (2000)*
Week 15	November 23, T	External factors in SLA: Social contexts	Ehrlich (1997)* Siegel (2003—D&L ch. 9)
	November 25, Th	No class – Thanksgiving Break	
Week 16	November 30, T	External factors in SLA: Language policies and politics	Pavlenko (2001)* Ciscel (2002)* Myers-Scotton (in press)
	December 2, Th	External factors in SLA: Instruction, acquisition, learning	Doughty (2003-- D&L ch. 10)
Final	December 10 5:00 PM	Final Paper due	

Reaction essays: Maximum 3 points each. Each must be submitted on the date due to receive full credit. Expected length **300-500 words**. *Please do not exceed this limit*. Criteria for grading will be promptness of submission, completeness, and insight.

1) Interview two people about their second/foreign language learning experience. One should consider him/herself a relatively good language learner and one a relatively poor language learner. Write a report on the two interviews, focusing on the following points: 1) what is their basis for judging their relative success or failure? 2) To what do they attribute their success or lack of it? 3) Are there any differences between the experience of good vs. poor learners? Etc.

2) In light of what is known about cross-linguistic influence, what differences (if any) do you think desirable between language teaching materials for use with classes of learners with the same L1 and those for use with learners with a variety of different L1s? Are 'English for Japanese speakers' or 'French for speakers of German' meaningful titles for textbooks?

3) Argue for one of the following four positions:

- a. Adults do have at least partial access to UG for SLA.
- b. Adults do not have at least partial access to UG for SLA.
- c. There is a Critical Period for SLA.
- d. There is not a Critical Period for SLA.

Please cite evidence for the point of view you espouse.

4) Some L2 researchers distinguish between second language learning and foreign language learning. Do you think this is a valid distinction? Why or why not? How might your teaching materials and techniques vary depending upon whether you were teaching a second or a foreign language?

5) If you are asked by an educational agency to recommend the age at which formal instruction in an L2 should begin, what would you recommend? Why? What social and cognitive factors should be considered in making such a recommendation?

Critical Review Papers: Choose 4 **original research articles** from SLA related journals (articles published after 1990 preferred). You can choose any topic(s) of your interest or the topic(s) you want to work on for your term paper (the latter is strongly encouraged). Maximum 10 points each. Each paper should be approximately 4-5 pages, typed, double-spaced. The criteria for grading are *content* (review: accuracy and completeness; & critique: insight and relevance to SLA) and *form* (clarity, organization, spelling etc.). No assignment will be accepted more than one week after the date due.

Each review paper should include the following components.

1. Full bibliographic citation
2. Review
 - a. Statement of major issue or question being addressed (e.g. what hypothesis is being tested? What is the paper about? etc)
 - b. Theoretical perspective and background assumptions
 - c. Brief summary of major points/conclusions
3. Critique: Your evaluation of the article, particularly with respect to theoretical adequacy. Provide your own insight into the information discussed.

Research Paper: Select one interesting question in SLA theory to investigate. The content and organization of the paper should include:

- a. Introduction
Explain the question/topic you are exploring and why it is important
- b. Body: Explain the positions of at least two different theoretical perspectives on this question. Include supporting evidence for each, along with appropriate documentation.
- c. Conclusion: Evaluate the relative adequacy of these theoretical perspectives. What is the 'best' answer to this question in the light of present knowledge? What still is not known about it?
- d. Bibliography: the bibliography should include **at least 10 primary references** and must be cited in the paper.

The length of the paper should be approximately 15-18 pages, typed, double-spaced. **Due: 12/10 at 5 PM**
Students are encouraged to discuss the topic with the instructor by mid-October.

Presentations: Students will present at least one article of their selection from the assigned readings (*marked papers), summarizing the relevant information for the class and then providing two questions/concerns to generate class discussion. Sign-up for these presentations will take place within the first two weeks of class.

How to read and critique research articles

(adapted from Johnson, 1992 pp. 177-8)

* To help you organize the information you read in research articles, you should (minimally) answer the following set of questions for each study.

1. What is the purpose of the research: research questions and hypotheses?
2. In what context is the research conducted? Classroom, naturalistic, lab, etc.
3. What are the theoretical and other orientations of the researcher?
4. What are the variables in the study? What is the researcher manipulating, controlling, measuring? How well does the literature review motivate the variables/hypotheses and purpose of the research?
5. Data collection procedures:
 - Subjects: Who are the subjects/participants in the study? How many are there and how are they selected? What are the relevant characteristics of the subject/data pool? Is this appropriate, given the research questions?
 - Tasks/procedures: What procedures are used to collect data? Are these appropriate for research questions? What means are used to control extraneous variables and to achieve internal validity?
6. Results/Discussion:
 - What results are found, what analyses are used to determine these?
 - What factors might have influenced the results?

- How are the results interpreted? Do you agree with the interpretations?
- How well does the discussion of results relate to discussion in literature review, research question?

7. What conclusions are drawn? Do you agree with these? Why? Why not?

8. What is the contribution of the study to our knowledge of L2 acquisition? What are the implications—stated or otherwise?

***** SLA related journals:**

Applied Linguistics
 Applied Psycholinguistics
 Language Learning
 Second Language Research
 Studies in Second Language Acquisition
 TESOL Quarterly

Readings included in the course packet:

- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1999) Exploring the interlanguage of interlanguage pragmatics: a research agenda for acquisitional pragmatics. *Language Learning* 49:4, 677-713.
- Bley-Vroman, Robert. (1989) What is the logical problem of second language learning? In Gass, S & J. Schachter (eds.) *Linguistic Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*.
- Bolonyai, Agnes (2002) Case systems in contact: syntactic and lexical case in bilingual child language. *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 21:2, 1-35.
- Ciscel, M. (2002) Linguistic Opportunism and English in Moldova. *World Englishes*, 2002, 21, 3, Nov, 403-419
- DeKeyser, R. (2003) Implicit and Explicit Learning. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- DeKeyser, R. (2000) The robustness of critical period effects in second language acquisition. In *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 22, 499-533.
- Dornyei, Z. & Skehan, P. (2003) Individual differences in second language learning. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds), *The handbook of SLA*. Ch.18.
- Doughty, C. (2003) Instructed SLA: Constraints, Compensation, and Enhancement. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Ehrlich, S. (1997) Gender as Social Practice: Implications for Second Language Acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1997, 19, 4, Dec, 421-446
- Ellis, N.C. (2003) Constructions, chunking, and connectionism: the emergence of second language structure. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds), *The Handbook of SLA*.
- Ellis, R. (1994) Pragmatic aspects of learner language. In *The study of SLA*, ch. 5.
- Ellis, R. (1994) Individual learner differences. In *The Study of SLA*, ch. 11.
- Gass, S. (2003) Input and interaction. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds), *The Handbook of SLA*, ch. 9.
- Hansen, L. (2001) Language attrition: the fate of the start. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 21, 60-73.
- Hawkins, R. (2001) *Second Language Syntax*. Chapter 8.
- Hulstijn, J. (2003) Incidental and Intentional Learning. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Hyltenstam, K & Abrahamsson, N. (2003) Maturational constraints in SLA. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds). *The Handbook of SLA*.

- Krashen, S. (1987) Five Hypotheses about second language acquisition. In Krashen, Stephen D. 1987. *Principles and practices in second language acquisition*. New York: Prentice-Hall
- Kroll, J. & Sunderman, G. (2003) Cognitive Processes in Second language Learners and Bilinguals: The Development of Lexical and Conceptual Representations. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Laufer, B. & Hulstijn, J. (2001) Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition in a Second Language: The Construct of Task-Induced Involvement. *Applied Linguistics*, 2001, 22, 1, Mar, 1-26.
- Libben, G. (2000) Representation and Processing in the Second Language Lexicon: The Homogeneity Hypothesis. In Archibald, J. (ed.), *Second language Acquisition and Linguistic Theory*.
- Long, M. (2003) Stabilization and Fossilization in Interlanguage Development. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Major, R. & Faudree, M. (1996) Markedness Universals and the Acquisition of Voicing Contrasts by Korean Speakers of English. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1996, 18, 1, Mar, 69-90.
- Mitchell, R. & Myles, F. (1998) *Second Language Learning Theories*. Chapters 2, 5, 7.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2005 forthcoming) *Multiple Voices: Introduction to Bilingualism*. Ch. 12.
- Odlin, T. (2003) Cross-Linguistic Influence. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Paribakht, T. S. & Wesche, M. (1997) Vocabulary enhancement activities and reading for meaning in second language vocabulary acquisition. In Coady, G. & Hucklin, T. (eds). *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*.
- Pavlenko, A. (2001) Bilingualism, Gender, and Ideology. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 2001, 5, 2, June, 117-151.
- Pienemann, M. (2003) Language processing capacity. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds), *The Handbook of SLA*. Ch. 20.
- Robinson, P. (2003) Attention and Memory during SLA. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds). *The Handbook of SLA*. Ch. 19.
- Romaine, S. (2003) Variation. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Schafer, R.J. & de Villiers, J. (2000) Imagining Articles: What *a* and *the* Can Tell Us About the Emergence of DP. In Howell, S. C. et al (eds), *BUCLD 24 Proceedings* 609-620.
- Schwartz, B. & Sprouse, R. (1996) L2 Cognitive States and the Full Transfer/Full Access Model. *Second Language Research*, 1996, 12, 1, Jan, 40-72
- Siegel, J. (2003) Social Context. Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Sorace, A. (2003) Near-Nativeness. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Sorace, A. (2000) Differential effects of attrition in the L1 Syntax of near-native L2 speakers. In Howell, C.S. et al (eds), *BUCLD 24 Proceedings*, 719-725.
- Swain, M. (2000) The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In Lantolf, J. *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*.
- Vainikka, A. & Young-Scholten, M. (1996) Gradual Development of L2 Phrase Structure. *Second Language Research*, 1996, 12, 1, Jan, 7-39
- VanPatten, B. (2000). Thirty Years of Input (or Intake, the Neglected Sibling). In *Social and cognitive factors in Second Language Acquisition: Selected proceedings of the 1999 Second Language Research Forum*, eds. Swierzbins, Bonnie, Morris, Frank, Anderson, Michael E., Klee, Carol A., & Tarone, Elaine, Somerville, MA: Cascadilla, 2000, pp 287-311.
- VanPatten, B. & Cadierno, T. (1993) Explicit Instruction and Input Processing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1993, 15, 2, June, 225-243.

- White, L. (2003) On the Nature of Interlanguage Representation: Universal Grammar in the Second Language. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- White, L. (2000) Second Language Acquisition: From Initial to Final State. In Archibald, J. (ed.) *Second language Acquisition and Linguistic Theory*.
- White, L. (1996) The Tale of the Ugly Duckling (Or the Coming of Age of Second Language Acquisition Research). *Proceedings of the Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development*, 1996, 20, 1, 1-17