Linguistics 5305/4327  
Second Language Acquisition  
Meeting Time: Wednesday 1:30-4:30  
Meeting Location: Trimble Hall 218  
Section 001  
Fall 2009

Instructor information:  
Instructor: Cindy Kilpatrick  
Email: cynkil@uta.edu  
Office: Hammond Hall 405  
Office Phone: 817-272-5334  
Office Hours: Monday 3-5 and by appointment

Catalog Description:
Second Language Acquisition (SLA) focuses on the distinctly human instinct of language acquisition as it operates outside (or beyond) the domain of an individual’s first (native) language. More specifically, it examines how, why, and under what conditions human beings acquire a second language. While such a focus may seem simple and clear to language teachers, the human instinct of language acquisition comprises several complex dimensions that are explored in this course, including the linguistic, psycholinguistic, cognitive, socio-pragmatic, micro sociolinguistic, and macro sociolinguistic dimensions. While much of the course material reviews some of the scholarly literature regarding these theoretical dimensions, time will be dedicated to discussing their implications for instructional strategies in the second language classroom. The goal of this course is to help students develop BOTH a strong theoretical foundation with regard to language acquisition AND the acute analytical skills required to consider such theory critically, both on which to base future decisions in their classrooms.

Course Objectives:
After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:
1) Identify and describe different theoretical approaches to second language acquisition  
2) Analyze second language data in terms of different theoretical approaches  
3) Analyze second language data in terms of pedagogical treatment  
4) Read and critique literature in the field of second language acquisition  
5) Defend and evaluate different pedagogical practices in light of SLA theory  
6) Synthesize the findings of primary data and a body of literature on a given topic and discuss what the literature and data suggest about the language, language learners, and/or the language classroom

Intended Audience:  
This course is designed for students who have some understanding of linguistic concepts and terminology that are generally provided in an introductory course such as 5300. Students who have not successfully completed Ling 5300 at UT Arlington should speak with the professor immediately following the first class to verify that they meet the prerequisite.
Textbook:
Having the textbook is a necessity for this course. Most weeks you will have a reading assignment that you will be expected to complete before coming to class on Wednesday. This reading will be either from the textbook or one of the articles listed below, or both. Participation in class discussions will rely on having read and understood the reading. The book is available on amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and in the campus bookstore. Here's the reference:


Additional required reading (see schedule for relevant dates):


Course Blog:
We will be using a blog for many of our course discussions and questions. Please check your UTA email for an invitation to be an author on the blog. After establishing blog authorship, post an introduction about yourself and why you are here.
Grading and Course Requirements

Your course grade will be determined in the following manner:

- **Class and blog participation:** 30%
- **Interlanguage interviews:** 30%
- **Final Paper:** 40%

**Class and Blog Participation:**
Participation in this course is crucial. Students are expected to attend class and actively engage in discussion of relevant course topics, both in class and on the blog. Questions related to the reading, the interviews, and the course in general will be posted regularly on the blog, and each student is expected to not only respond to these questions, but also to post their own questions for discussion. The maximum possible points per week will be 2.5 (up to 30 points total for the semester) for participation in class and blog discussions. Non-attendance or partial attendance may result in lowering this grade.

A well-thought-out blog post should be readable. Use correct grammar and mechanics, and divide paragraphs as needed. Posts should show evidence of original thought, and should cite relevant material, but are not intended to be major writing assignments; rather, they are thinking assignments that should provide the class with differing viewpoints and ideas.

An important note: You are more than welcome to question any of the claims made in the readings, lectures, and other materials provided, and the blog is an appropriate place to do that. However, please be prepared to explain the source of your question and to support your opinion. In addition, courtesy and respect are expected in your posts. You are welcome to disagree with someone’s point of view and question their conclusions, but please do so without being rude, antagonistic, or disrespectful. Posts that do not show common courtesy will not be graded.

Assessment (questions used in grading):
- Did the student attend class and maintain a physical and mental presence throughout?
- Did the student respond to an appropriate number of blog questions?
- Did the student contribute to class discussions and activities?
- Did the student’s contributions to class and blog show evidence of thought and preparation?

**Interlanguage Interviews:**
Throughout the semester, students will be expected to work with second language speakers and collect data about the way they use their L2. Students should choose people to work with (consultants) from one of the following groups:

a) speakers of language X who have learned English as a second language

b) speakers of language Y who have learned the student’s native language as an L2

In other words, all students will work with either L2 speakers of English, or L2 speakers of that student’s own L1. Note that at least 3 different speakers will be needed for some interviews, so plan accordingly! Consultants may be friends, relatives, teachers, students, or almost anyone, but they may not be linguists! Ling professors and fellow students in this department are ineligible for this honor.

The purpose of the interviews is for the student to determine the features of the L2 grammar of their consultant(s). Students will be given or will generate a list of questions or target language features to focus on in their interviews at different points in the semester. These questions will be intended to determine how L2 speakers produce specific forms and structures.

After working with their consultant, students will be expected to write up their results in a clear,
coherent summary, comparing the language of their L2 consultant with the language of L1 speakers of that language, and analyzing the data in light of different theoretical viewpoints and practical applications. These write-ups will be due 2 weeks after the interview information is distributed in class.

Assessment (questions asked in grading):
- Did the student illustrate knowledge of L2 features of their consultant?
- How well-supported are the conclusions and interpretations of the student based on the specific data collected?
- To what extent does the student ground their conclusions on a well-reasoned theoretical foundation?
- How clear and comprehensible is the write-up of the interview?

Final Paper:
All enrolled students will be expected to complete a final paper for the course. This paper should consist of 10-15 double-spaced typed pages, clearly written and documented. Students may choose one of the following 2 options, both of which will be due at the scheduled final exam period:

Option A: Research synthesis paper
For this option, students will choose a topic of interest and relevance in SLA and conduct extensive library research on it, determining what has already been shown on this topic, how different researchers have handled the issue, and what questions remain to be answered. This information should be shared in a clearly-written, detailed essay that states a thesis or argument and then supports it. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor individually to discuss their topic, and a paper proposal will be due by October 21.

Option B: Interlanguage description and analysis
For this option, students will extend and build on their interlanguage interviews to determine an overall picture of the interlanguage of language X. This will include detailed analysis of L2 problems, along with possible explanations from L1 or other factors. Students interested in TESOL are encouraged to choose this option and develop ‘treatment plans’ for how to improve different target features of the language. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor individually to discuss their interlanguage description, and a paper proposal will be due by October 21.

For both options, assessment will use the following questions:
- How clear and logical is the student’s writing?
- To what degree does the student show knowledge of scholarly literature?
- To what extent does the student illustrate knowledge and mastery of course concepts?
- How effectively does the student synthesize and present information?
- How critically does the student examine the data and/or literature?
Departmental Policies

Final Review Week

A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the course syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week.

Americans With Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

As a student, your responsibility rests with informing the instructor in writing or email and providing the official documentation from the Office for Students with Disabilities no later than the end of the second week of classes.

According to Department of Linguistics and TESOL policy, "unofficial" or "informal" requests for accommodations (i.e., those not recorded by the Office of Students with Disabilities) cannot be honored.

Academic Dishonesty

At The University of Texas at Arlington, academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. Students involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from UTA.

According the UT System Regents' Rules and Regulations, "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22).

While the Department of Linguistics and TESOL hopes to foster a sense of community in which students can enhance their educational experience by conferring with each other about the lectures, readings, and assignments, all work submitted must be the product of each student's own effort. Students are expected to know and honor the standards of academic integrity followed by American universities; ignorance of these standards is not an excuse for committing an act of academic dishonesty (including plagiarism). If you have questions, please speak with your instructor, your
Please be advised that departmental policy requires instructors to formally file charges with the Office of Student Conduct, following procedures laid out for faculty there (http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/faculty.html), as well as notify the department chair of the filing of the charges.

Student Support Services Available
The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for information and referrals.

Enrolling in / Withdrawing from this Course
Students are responsible for making all decisions regarding their enrollment status in UTA courses. Should you decide to withdraw from this course, you must either (1) drop via the internet through the MyMav system or (2) complete an official "add/drop" and file it in the Linguistics and TESOL department office. Any student who stops attending class and/or fails to complete assigned work will not be "automatically" dropped; in such cases, unless you officially withdraw, you will receive a grade of F. (Note: Students enrolled in graduate courses may not "replace" a grade; all grades are permanent.)

A student dropping his/her last (only) course cannot withdraw as above. Rather, s/he must go in person to the UTA Registrar's Office (Davis Hall, First Floor) and complete a request to resign from the university.

Auditors
The Department of Linguistics and TESOL has a "no audit" policy. Students attending LING classes must be officially enrolled in those courses. Exception: Students who have already fulfilled a degree requirements and would like to sit in on a comparable course to prepare for their comprehensive / diagnostic examination may do so (with the permission of the professor).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Journal article</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>Intro to Second Language Acquisition</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapters 1 and 2</td>
<td>none</td>
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<td>September 2</td>
<td>Formal approaches to SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapter 6</td>
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<td>Functional approaches to SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapter 7</td>
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<td>September 16</td>
<td>The role of the L1 in SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapters 4 and 5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>Speech processing in SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapters 8 and 9</td>
<td>Weber and Cutler 2006</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>September 30</td>
<td>The role of input, output, and interaction</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapter 10</td>
<td>Singleton and Newport 2004</td>
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<td>October 7</td>
<td>Individual variables in SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapter 12</td>
<td>Flege et al. 1999</td>
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<td>October 14</td>
<td>Syntax and morphology in SLA</td>
<td>Gass and Selinker: Chapter 3</td>
<td>White 1991</td>
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Week 11  November 4  
Topic: More phonology and phonetics in SLA  
Reading: Gass and Selinker: none  
Journal article: Altenberg 2005 (a and b)  

Week 12  November 11  
Topic: Semantics, pragmatics, and the lexicon in SLA  
Reading: Gass and Selinker: Chapter 13  
Journal article: Ionin et al 2009, Ionin and Montrul (accepted)  

Week 13  November 18  
Topic: More semantics, pragmatics, and the lexicon in SLA  
Reading: Gass and Selinker: none  
Journal article: Kroll et al. 2002  

Week 14  November 25  
Topic: Teaching second languages  
Reading: Gass and Selinker: Chapters 11 and 14  
Journal article: Ellis 1997  

Week 15  December 2  
Topic: More on teaching second languages  
Reading: Gass and Selinker: Chapters 11 and 14  
Journal article: none