

**Linguistics 790: Second Language Acquisition**  
**MTh 5-6:15**  
**Humanities Classroom Building 312**

**Instructor information:** Mila Tasseva

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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:**

Doughty, Catherine, and Michael Long. 2003. The handbook of Second Language Acquisition. Blackwell. Additional readings to be posted on Blackboard.

**Course requirements:**

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| 1) Critical review papers (4):         | 40% |
| 2) Research paper:                     | 20% |
| 3) Reaction essays (5):                | 20% |
| 4) Presentations:                      | 10% |
| 5) Class participation and discussion: | 10% |

**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. Needless to say, all attendance rules of the University of South Carolina apply to this class too.

**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)

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>January 9, M</b>	Introduction and background	
	<b>January 12, Th</b>	The recent history of SLA research Contrastive Analysis Error Analysis Developmental patterns	Mitchell & Myles (Ch. 2)
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>January 16, M</b>	<b>no class</b>	<b>MLK day</b>
	<b>January 19, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: Typological & functional approaches <b>Reaction Essay #1 due</b>	Mitchell & Myles (Ch. 5) Major & Faudree (1996)
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>January 23, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Variation	Romaine (2003—D&L ch. 14)
	<b>January 26, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: Cross-linguistic influence	Odlin (2003—D&L ch. 15)
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>January 30, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Implicit vs. explicit knowledge <b>Review paper #1 due</b>	DeKeyser (2003—D&L ch. 11) VanPatten & Cadierno (1993)
	<b>February 2, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: Incidental vs. intentional learning	Hulstijn (2003—D&L ch. 12) Laufer & Hulstijn (2001)
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>February 6, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Stabilization and fossilization	Long (2003—D&L ch. 16)
	<b>February 9, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - access to UG <b>Reaction Essay #2 due</b>	White (2003—D&L ch. 2) Bley-Vroman (1989)
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>February 13, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - transfer	Vainikka & Young-Scholten (1998) Epstein, Flynn & Martohardjono (1998)
	<b>February 16, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - initial state	Schwartz & Sprouse (1996) Slabakova (2003)
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>February 20, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Generative SLA: - steady state <b>Reaction Essay #3 due</b>	Hawkins (2001) Sorace (2003—D&L ch. 6)
	<b>February 23, Th</b>	SLA and linguistics: The lexicon	Kroll & Sunderman (2003—D&L ch. 5) Libben (2000) Paribakht & Wesche (1997)
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>February 27, M</b>	SLA and linguistics: Bilingualism - language attrition	Genesee (2002) Sorace (2003) Bolonyai (2002)

	<b>March 2, Th</b>	SLA and psycholinguistics: Cognitive approaches <b>Review paper # 2 due</b>	Schaffer & De Villiers (2000) Bialystok (2002)
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>March 6, 9</b>	<b>No class – Spring Break</b>	
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>March 13, M</b>	SLA and psycholinguistics: Connectionist models	Ellis (2003 – D&L ch. 4)
	<b>March 16, Th</b>	SLA and sociolinguistics: Sociocultural theory <b>Reaction Essay #4 due</b>	Mitchell & Myles (ch. 7) Donato & McCormick (1994)
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>March 20, M</b>	SLA and sociolinguistics: Pragmatics	Bardovi-Harlig (1999) Pavlenko (2002)
	<b>March 23, Th</b>	SLA and sociolinguistics: Language identity	Blackledge & Pavlenko (2001)
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>March 27, M</b>	SLA and sociolinguistics Language policies and politics <b>Review Paper #3 due</b>	Pavlenko (2001) Ciscl (2002)
	<b>March 30, Th</b>	Internal factors in SLA: Maturational constraints	Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson (2003 – D&L ch. 7) DeKeyser (2000)
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>April 3, M</b>	Internal factors in SLA: Attention and memory	Robinson (2003 – D&L ch. 19) Dewaele (2002)
	<b>April 6, Th</b>	Internal factors in SLA: Processing capacity <b>Reaction Essay #5 due</b>	Pienmann (2003 – D&L ch. 20)
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>April 10, M</b>	Internal factors in SLA: Individual differences	Dörnyei & Skehan (2003 – D&L ch. 18) Fabbro (2002)
	<b>April 13, Th</b>	External factors in SLA: Input, intake, output, interaction <b>Review Paper #4 due</b>	Gass (2003 – D&L ch. 9)
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>April 17, M</b>	External factors in SLA: Input, intake, output, interaction (continued)	VanPatten (2000) Swain (2000)
	<b>April 20, Th</b>	External factors in SLA: Social contexts	Ehrlich (1997) Siegel (2003 – D&L ch. 8)
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>April 24, M</b>	External factors in SLA: Instruction, acquisition, learning	Doughty (2003 – D&L ch. 10)
<b>Final</b>	<b>May 3, W 5:00 PM</b>	<b>Final Paper due</b>	

**Reaction essays:** Maximum 4 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) 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?
- 4) Argue for one of the following:
  - UG is the basis for all/any language acquisition
  - Input is the basis for all/any language acquisition
  - The semantic, pragmatic, and grammatical components of L1, L2, L3, etc. are shared while the lexicons are kept separate
  - No component is shared between L1, L2, L3, etc.
- 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). Each paper should be approximately 3-5 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.). **Late assignments will be marked half a grade down.**

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: 5/3 at 5 PM**  
Students are encouraged to discuss the topic with the instructor by mid-February.

**Presentations:** Students will two presentations of articles of their selection from the assigned readings (yellow marked papers). Each of you will make one presentation on your own and one with a classmate. Each presentation should summarize the relevant information for the class and then provide 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.
- Bialystok, Ellen. 2002. Cognitive processes of L2 users. In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. Vivian Cook. 145-166. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Blackledge, Adrian and Aneta Pavlenko. 2001. Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts. *The international journal of bilingualism* 5.3: 243-257.
- 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. (2000) The robustness of critical period effects in second language acquisition. In *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 22, 499-533.
- DeKeyser, R. (2003) Implicit and Explicit Learning. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Dewaele, Jean-Marc. 2002. Individual differences in L2 fluency: The effect of neuron-biological correlates. In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. Vivian Cook. 219-250. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- 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*.
- Epstein, S., Flynn, Suzanne, and Martohardjono, Gita. 1998. The strong continuity hypothesis: Some evidence concerning functional categories in adult L2 acquisition. In *The generative study of second language acquisition*, eds. Suzanne Flynn, Gita Martohardjono and Wayne O'Neal, 61-78. New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum.
- Fabbro, Franco. 2002. The neurolinguistics of L2 users. In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. Vivian Cook. 197-218. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Gass, S. (2003) Input and interaction. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds), *The Handbook of SLA*, ch. 9.
- Genesee, Fred. 2002. Portrait of the bilingual child. In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. Vivian Cook. 167-196. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- 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*.
- 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.
- 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.
- Pavlenko, Aneta. 2002. Poststructuralist approaches to the study of social factors in second language learning and use. In *Portraits of the L2 user*, ed. Vivian Cook. 275-302. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- 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*.
- Slabakova, Roumyana. 2003. Semantic evidence for functional categories in interlanguage grammars. *Second Language Research* 19.1: 42-75.
- 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.
- Sorace, A. (2003) Near-Nativeness. In Doughty, C. & Long, M. (eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*.
- Swain, M. (2000) The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In Lantolf, J. *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*.

- Vainikka, A. , and Young-Scholten, M. 1998. The initial state in the L2 acquisition of phrase structure. In *The generative study of second language acquisition*, eds. Suzanne Flynn, Gita Martohardjono and Wayne O'Neal, 17-34. New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum.
- VanPatten, B. & Cadierno, T. (1993) Explicit Instruction and Input Processing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1993, 15, 2, June, 225-243.
- 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. Swierzbin, Bonnie, Morris, Frank, Anderson, Michael E., Klee, Carol A., & Tarone, Elaine, Somerville, MA: Cascadilla, 2000, pp 287-311.
- 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*.