



The University of Southern Queensland

## Course specification

### Description: Principles of Second Language Learning

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
LIN	8001	40056	1, 2005	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

<b>Academic group:</b>	OPACS
<b>Academic org:</b>	OPACSP
<b>Student contribution band:</b>	National Priority Teaching
<b>ASCED code:</b>	070115

### STAFFING

Examiner: Francis Mangubhai

Moderator: Jane Kehrwald

### SYNOPSIS

Teachers of second languages need to have a theoretical framework which would enable them to evaluate their activities in the classroom more effectively. While in practice it is possible to find that an activity that is theoretically ineffective can be effective through teacher or other factors operating in the classroom, nevertheless to be able to teach creatively in the classroom, teachers need to know why something they do in the classroom works. No teacher operating in the classroom does so without some sort of theory of teaching, however rudimentary it might be. This course attempts to provide teachers with a coherent theory of second language learning. The course emphasises recent research in second language acquisition and the theoretical issues underlying such research. The course looks at the following topics: (a) various approaches to assessing and describing learner language; (b) the notion of "interlanguage"; (c) the question of transfer from first language in SLL; (d) cognitive processes and strategies involved in second language learning and communication; (e) individual learner characteristics, learning and environment; (f) social and cultural factors affecting L1 and L2 use; (g) consideration of the implications of SL learning research and theory for language teaching.

### OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. critically discuss the similarities and differences between first and second language acquisition;
2. identify and discuss the different ways that learner language can be assessed and described by discussing key concepts such as "interlanguage", "language learner language", "error analysis";
3. discuss the reasons for variability that exists in language learner language and give examples of different types of variability;
4. read more effectively research articles in SL journals;
5. critically discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various current SLA theories and identify elements in them that can be used in classroom;

6. identify the different types of communication strategies and assess their use in classroom;
7. develop some understanding of cognitive styles and be able to discuss the implications of learning styles for classroom teacher practice;
8. enumerate various types of learning strategies and critically discuss their role in SL learning;
9. identify the different types of individual differences and their putative effect upon the rate of SL learning;
10. develop a framework for a more analytic approach to SL classroom practices.

## TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. First and Second Language Acquisition: Same or different?	10.00
2. How do we describe second language development	15.00
3. A brief excursion into how to read research in SLA	5.00
4. Theories of Second Language Acquisition	20.00
5. Communication strategies	15.00
6. Learning a second language (cognitive styles, learning styles, & learning strategies)	15.00
7. Individual differences in Second Language Acquisition (intelligence, aptitude, motivation, sociocultural factors, age, affective & personality factors)	20.00

## TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

There is no prescribed text. A book of readings will be provided.

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

Brown, H.D. 2000, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, 4th edn, Addison Wesley Longman Inc, New York.

Ellis, R. 1994, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, OUP, Oxford.

## STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessment	25.00
Directed Study	100.00
Private Study	40.00

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg(%)	Due date
ASSIGNMENT 1	25.00	25.00	01 Apr 2005
REFLECTIVE JOURNAL 1	5.00	5.00	01 Apr 2005
RELECTIVE JOURNAL 2	5.00	5.00	13 May 2005
ASSIGNMENT 2	25.00	25.00	13 May 2005
TAKE HOME TEST	40.00	40.00	17 Jun 2005

## IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:  
There are no attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:  
To complete assignments successfully, students must achieve an overall mark of at least 50% (or a grade of C-).
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:  
A penalty may be applied if an arrangement for an assignment extension has not been negotiated before the due date.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:  
To be assured of a passing grade, students must demonstrate, via the summative assessment items, that they have achieved the required minimum standards in relation to the objectives of the course by: (i) satisfactorily completing the examination and assignments; and (ii) obtaining at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for all summative assessment items.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:  
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the weighted aggregate of the marks (or grades) obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:  
The take-home test is an open book test.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:  
N/A
- 8 University Regulations:  
Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6. Assessment, and 5.10 Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might

contravene University Regulations. These regulations can be found at the URL <http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm> or in the current USQ Handbook.

## **ASSESSMENT NOTES**

- 1 The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner.
- 2 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within five days if required by the Examiner.
- 3 The examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances.
- 4 The Faculty will normally only accept assessments that have been written, typed or printed on paper-based media.
- 5 The Faculty will NOT accept submission of assignments by facsimile.
- 6 Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner of the course to negotiate such special arrangements.
- 7 In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a Show holiday, the due date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the Examiner's convenience.
- 8 Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in a course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of a course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete - Make up). An IM grade will only be awarded when, in the opinion of the examiner, a student will be able to achieve the remaining objectives of the course after a period of non directed personal study.
- 9 Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or to sit for an examination at the scheduled time may apply to defer an assessment in a course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination); IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- 1 Over the two assignments and the reflective journal students will be expected to achieve at least half the marks.
  - 2 Students must submit both assignments, the journal and the take home test.
  - 3 To pass students must achieve at least 50% in the take home test.
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