



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at <http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>.
Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Principles of Second Language Learning

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
LIN	8001	87167	1, 2009	ONC	1.00	Toowoomba

Academic group:	FOEDU
Academic org:	FOE002
Student contribution band:	National Priority Teaching
ASCED code:	070115

STAFFING

Examiner: Ann Dashwood
Moderator: Jeong-Bae Son

RATIONALE

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.

SYNOPSIS

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. NOTE: Minimum enrolment numbers apply to this offering. Should enrolments not reach the minimum number required for on-campus study, students may be transferred to the EXT or WEB offering and advised of this change before semester commences.

OBJECTIVES

The course objectives define the student learning outcomes for a course. The assessment item(s) that may be used to assess student achievement of an objective are shown in parenthesis. On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. critically discuss the similarities and differences between first and second language acquisition; (Assignment and Reflective Journal)

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"; (Assignment and Reflective Journal)
3. discuss the reasons for variability that exists in language learner language and give examples of different types of variability; (Assignment and Reflective Journal)
4. read more effectively research articles in SL journals; (Assignment; Take Home Exam and Reflective Journal)
5. critically discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various current SLA theories and identify elements in them that can be used in classroom; (Take Home Exam)
6. identify the different types of communication strategies and assess their use in classroom; (Take Home Exam)
7. develop some understanding of cognitive styles and be able to discuss the implications of learning styles for classroom teacher practice; (Take Home Exam)
8. enumerate various types of learning strategies and critically discuss their role in SL learning; (Take Home Exam)
9. identify the different types of individual differences and their putative effect upon the rate of SL learning; (Take Home Exam)
10. develop a framework for a more analytic approach to SL classroom practices. (Assignment; Take Home Exam)
11. Demonstrate competence in scholarly writing including spelling, grammar, punctuation and bibliographic referencing (Assignment and Take Home Exam)

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.

Whether you are on, or off campus, the USQ Library is an excellent source of information <http://www.usq.edu.au/library>. The gateway to education resources is here: <http://www.usq.edu.au/library/faculties/education/default.htm>

Brown, HD 2006, *Principles of language learning and teaching*, 5th edn, Addison Wesley Longman Inc, New York.

Ellis, R 1994, *The study of second language acquisition*, OUP, Oxford.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessments	25.00
Directed Study	100.00
Private Study	40.00

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date
ASSIGNMENT	35.00	35.00	03 Apr 2009 (see note 1)
REFLECTIVE JOURNAL	5.00	5.00	03 Apr 2009 (see note 2)
TAKE HOME EXAM	60.00	60.00	12 Jun 2009

NOTES

1. APA style is the referencing system required in this course. Students should use APA style in their assignments to format details of the information sources they have cited in their work. The USQ library provides advice on how to format information sources using this system. http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/ehelp/ref_guides/apastyle/default.htm
2. The Reflective Journal is to be submitted with Assignment.

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 satisfactorily complete an individual assessment item a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks (Depending upon the requirements in Statement 4 below, students may not have to satisfactorily complete each assessment item to receive a passing grade in this course.)

- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
If students submit assignments after the due date without (prior) approval of the examiner then a penalty of 5% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment may apply for each working day late up to ten working days at which time a mark of zero may be recorded. No assignments will be accepted after model answers have been posted.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the aggregate of the weighted marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:
There is no examination in this course
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:
As there are no examinations in this course, there will be no deferred or supplementary examinations.
- 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>.