

Second Language Acquisition

This course is a linguistic exploration into adult second language acquisition. We begin with a brief overview of child first language development and attempt to understand a version of *Plato's Problem* --how is it that language learners know so much about their language given so little? But adult language development is not as successful. Here we are faced with a version of *Orwell's Problem* --how is it that most adult learners seem to know so little about an L₂ when exposed to so much?

We will focus on four major issues in adult second language acquisition: 1) the effect of age on acquisition; 2) the availability of Universal Grammar to adult learners; 3) the sources of variation in language attainment; and 4) modularity and language learning.

Requirements:	classroom participation	20%
	homeworks	10%
	weekly page	30%
	prospectus+paper	40%

Students are expected read, discuss, and question all assigned readings. You are encouraged to speak out in class, and send comments and queries via e-mail. There will be 5 one-page responses to the reading assignments and class discussions. These will be due weekly and must be no longer than one double-spaced typewritten page (bibliographic entries are extra). These pages should be creative rather than mere summaries of the material. The page should reflect what the current readings/ class discussion mean to you. You may write about implications: pedagogical, linguistic-theoretical, or research. You may not had in more than 1 page in any given week. E-mail submissions will be accepted as MS Word attachments. There will be numerous short homework assignments that deal with real L₂ data. Students can work together on the solutions. A final paper of approximately 10 double-spaced typed pages in length is required. The paper can be on any theoretical topic. A prospectus for this paper is also required. This will be a description of a focused topic for the final paper and a short list of tentative bibliographic sources. The entire prospectus will not exceed one page. You will give an informal 3-minute oral report on the progress of your paper on 3 May.

Texts:

1. Compiled sets of the required readings.
2. Gass, S. and L. Selinker. 2001. *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. Second Edition. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

calendar:

no class:	8 march
prospectus due:	5 april
no weekly pages will be accepted after	19 april
paper due	10 may

SYLLABUS

Date	Readings
26 january Introduction to the field How kids do it: first language acquisition A. phonology B. morphology C. syntax D. caretaker speech	G & S ch. 1, 4
2 february Regarding the L ₂ data Errors Elicitation, Collection, Analysis	Williams, 1981 G & S ch. 2
9 february The role of the native language in SLA	G & S ch. 3, 5
16 february Second Language Phonology	Leather, 1999
23 february The Critical Period Controversy: phonology and morphosyntax	Flege, 1987; Patkowski, 1990; Dekeyser, 2000
1 march Critical period: what <i>is</i> native competence? synthesis	Ioup et.al. 1994 Newport, 1991
8 march	no class
15 march Linguistic markedness relative clauses	G & S ch. 6; Eckman, et. al 1988; Croteau, 1995

22 march Universal Grammar in L2 do adults still have it? yes / no	G & S ch. 7 Felix, 1991; Schachter, 1991
29 march Is Language Learning unique?	O'Grady, 1999; Schwartz , 1999
5 april Contextual variation in L ₂ Linguistic contexts Socio-linguistic contexts	G & S ch. 9
12 april Sources of variation: non-linguistic why do some learners do better?	G & S ch. 12
19 april Modular SLA Models: Krashen's monitor anti-Krashen	G & S ch. 8; Gregg 1984; Percival 1984; Felix 1985; (re-read Newport)
26 april Input, output and interaction in SLA	G & S ch. 10
3 may The perfect language learner Reports on Papers	
10 may	papers due by 5:00 pm in robinson a-418

READINGS

- Croteau, K. 1995. Second Language Acquisition of Relative Clause Structures by Learners of Italian. In F. Eckman, D. Highland, P. Lee, J. Milcham, and R. Weber (eds.). *Second Language Acquisition: Theory and Pedagogy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Eckman, F., L. Bell, and D. Nelson. 1988. On the Generalization of Relative Clause Instruction in the Acquisition of English as a Second Language. *Applied Linguistics* 9:1-20.
- DeKeyser, R. 2000. The Robustness of Critical Period Effects in Second Language Acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. 22: 499-533.
- Felix, S. 1985. More Evidence on Competing Cognitive Systems. *Second Language Research* 1:47-72.
- Felix, S. 1991. The Accessibility of Universal Grammar in Second Language Acquisition. In L. Eubank (ed.). *Point Counterpoint*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Flege, J. 1987. A Critical Period for Learning to Pronounce Foreign Languages? *Applied Linguistics* 8:162-177.
- Gregg, K. 1984. Krashen's Monitor and Occam's Razor. *Applied Linguistics* 5: 79-100.
- Ioup, G., E. Boustagui, M. El Tigi, and M. Moselle. 1994. Re-Examining the Critical Period Hypothesis: A Case Study of Successful Adult SLA in a Naturalistic Environment. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. 16: 73-98.
- Leather, J. 1999. Second Language Speech Research: An Introduction. In J. Leather, (ed.) *Phonological Issues in Language Learning*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Newport, E. 1991. Contrasting Conceptions of the Critical Period for Language. in S. Carey and R. Gelman. (eds.) *Epigenesis of Mind*. Erlbaum.
- O'Grady, W. 1999. Toward a New Nativism. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 21:621-633.
- Patkowski, M. 1990. Age and Accent in a Second Language: A Reply to James Emil Flege. *Applied Linguistics* 11:73-89.
- Percival, V. 1984. Gregg's Throat and Occam's Razor. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* 8:104-107.
- Schachter, J. 1991. Issues in the Accessibility Debate: A Reply to Felix. In L. Eubank (ed.). *Point Counterpoint*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Schwartz, B. 1999. Let's Make Up Your Mind. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 21: 635-655.
- Williams, J. 1981. The Phenomenology of Error. *College Composition and Communication*. 32: 152-168.

Additional Textbook Readings

- Archibald, J. (ed.) 2000. *Second Language Acquisition and Linguistic Theory*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Barasch, R. and C. James (eds.). 1994. *Beyond the Monitor Model*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Birdsong, D. (ed.) 1999. *Second Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis*. Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Brown, H. 1994. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, H. And Gonzo, S. 1995. *Readings on Second Language Acquisition*. Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Eckman, F., Highland, D., Lee, P., Milcham, J., and Weber, R. (eds.). 1995. *Second Language Acquisition: Theory and Pedagogy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ellis, R. 1990. *Instructed Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ellis, R. 1994. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eubank, L. (ed.) 1991. *Point Counterpoint: Universal Grammar in Second Language*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Flynn, S., and W. O'Neil (eds.). 1988. *Linguistic Theory in Second Language Acquisition*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Gass, S., and Madden, C. 1985. *Input in Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- Gass, S. and J. Schachter (eds.). 1989. *Linguistic Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gass, S., and Selinker, L. (eds.) 1983. *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. Rowley: Newbury House.
- Huebner, T., and C. Ferguson (eds.). 1991. *Crosscurrents in Second Language Acquisition*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Ioup, G., and S. Weinberger (eds.). 1987. *Interlanguage Phonology*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. and Long, M. 1991. *An Introduction to Second Language Research*. London: Longman.
- Lippi-Green, R. 1997. *English with an Accent*. London: Routledge.
- Mitchell, R. And Myles, F. 1998. *Second Language Learning Theories*. London: Arnold.
- Pankhurst, J., Sharwood-Smith, M., and Van Buren, P. (eds.) 1988. *Learnability and Second Languages*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Ritchie, W., and T. Bhatia, (eds.) 1996. *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Scovel, T. 1988. *A Time to Speak: A Psycholinguistic Inquiry into the Critical Period for Human Speech*. Cambridge: Newbury House.
- Scovel, T. 1995. Differentiation, Recognition, and Identification in the Discrimination of Foreign Accents. In J. Archibald (ed.) *Phonological Acquisition and Phonological Theory*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Selinker, L. 1992. *Rediscovering Interlanguage*. London: Longman.
- Sharwood-Smith. 1994. *Second Language Learning: Theoretical Foundations*. London: Longman.
- Spolsky, B. 1989. *Conditions for Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Strozer, J. 1994. *Language Acquisition After Puberty*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Swann, M., and Smith, B. (eds.) 1987. *Learner English*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press.
- Tarone, E. 1988. *Variation in Interlanguage*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Tarone, E., S. Gass, and A. Cohen (eds.). 1994. *Research Methodology in Second Language Acquisition*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Towell, R., and R. Hawkins. 1994. *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- White, L. 1989. *Universal Grammar and Second Language Acquisition*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.