

LIN 6720 Spring 2015
M 8th – 10th (3 pm – 6 pm)
MAT 004
Office hours: M 5th, W, F 7th
& by appointment

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Required textbooks:

Ortega, Lourdes (2008). Understanding Second Language Acquisition. Routledge.

Tarone, Elaine and Bonnie Swierzbin (2009). Exploring Learner Language. Oxford UP.

Other readings will be made available through e-learn, and are due as marked on the calendar, below.

Students are expected to come to class having read all material listed on the syllabus for that class period, and prepared to discuss it in detail. Active participation in this discussion is an essential component of the course, and will therefore constitute a considerable portion of your final grade. Attendance will be taken daily; unexcused absences will result in a 0 for participation for the day. Weekly reading assignments will generally not exceed 100 pages.

Content & Objectives: Second Language Acquisition examines the neurological, psychological and social processes involved in acquiring a second language, by both children and adults. We will explore the concept and nature of Interlanguage and the role of input, along with individual and collective factors that may influence one's success in acquiring a second language. We will compare and contrast the ways that various theories of SLA view the impact of instruction, of age, of individual differences and of affective factors on both the route and the rate of language acquisition, with comparisons to first language acquisition, where appropriate.

Course requirements: The following are mandatory elements of the course, and will factor into your final grade for LIN 6720. They are explained in order of presentation on the syllabus:

Online discussion: Because we will lose an entire week's worth of class due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, I have assigned reading for that week, and we will participate in an online discussion (details to be provided). Your contribution to this discussion will count 10 points toward your final grade. I will provide a first prompt to initiate the conversation, asking you to react to the readings. From there, I will expect you to both initiate further discussion and

react to classmates' posts. The discussion will take place throughout the week, based on a calendar of dates that we establish on the first day of class.

Short essay: Three times throughout the semester, you will be asked to write a 2-3 page essay on a given topic. This essay will ask you to think personally about materials that you have read, and to reflect on differences in the theories of second language acquisition that we will study throughout the term. The topic of the essay will be provided the week before it is due, in class.

Midterm exam: A one-hour mid-term examination will test your understanding of material covered to that point, focusing on terminology and application of theories studied.

Data analyses: A major portion of your semester's grade will come from 3 data analyses that you will complete, using data samples in the Tarone and Swierzbins text. Follow the directions that I give you carefully, as each data analysis will be different, and will NOT necessarily follow the instructions given in the textbook.

Class preparation and participation: Preparation prior to class and participation during class are essential to this course. Students who do not contribute to the class discussion can expect a lowered grade for this portion of their final grade, regardless of their comprehension of the material.

Final project: A final research project will be required for this course. Students may choose to use the data provided in the Tarone and Swierzbins text, but focus on an area of study that we do not discuss in class, or they may find another corpus to analyze. (Details will be provided in class concerning possible corpora.) The final paper will be submitted in stages: abstract, draft literature review and methodology, presentation of results to class, complete final paper.

Grades: Your final grade in this course will be determined on the basis of the following components, from which an average will be determined. This percentage will be used to determine the final grade in the course.

Midterm examination:	30 points
Final project:	65 points
Data analyses: 4 @15 pts.	60 points
Short essays: 3 @ 10 pts.	30 points
Preparation & participation:	15 points

200 points

Policies:

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Religious holidays:

Students and faculty must cooperate to allow each person to observe the holy days of his or her faith. Following UF policy, a student must **inform** the faculty member of the religious observances of his or her faith that will **conflict** with class attendance, with tests or examinations, or with other class activities **prior to the class or occurrence of that test or activity**. **No make-ups will be given after a holiday unless arrangements were made in advance with the instructor.**

Academic dishonesty:

The University of Florida statement regarding academic honesty and more specifically “giving and/or receiving unauthorized aid on student’s work” reads as follows:

- “Giving information includes, but is not limited to, allowing other students to use or copy work or answers to exam questions either while the exam is being given or after having taken the exam.
- Further, the taking of information includes, but is not limited to, copying from the answers provided in the book or ancillary materials, copying from another student’s paper [...], using information already written in books, [...], or asking anyone, students or not to review and/or correct assignments.
- Students found in violation of this policy will be referred to the appropriate administration for appropriate action according to the student judicial process.

Electronics in class:

Use of electronics for anything other than coursework is distracting to both you and those seated around you, and will not be tolerated. It is expected that you will silence all electronic equipment upon entering the classroom. (Emergency exceptions should be brought to the attention of your instructor.) Consultation of email, social media or text messages during class will result in loss of your preparation / participation points for the day.

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> . Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

Calendar:

Monday 1/12: Introduction: Ortega: Ch. 1

Tarone and Swierzbin Chs 1 and 2

Monday 1/19: No class, MLK, Jr. Day

VanPatten & Williams pp 1-12; Mitchell & Myles Ch. 1 **Online discussion**

Monday 1/26: Age: Ortega Ch. 2

Handbook of SLA (2012) Ch. 31

Essay 1 due

Monday 2/2: Nativist theories of SLA: Handbook of SLA (2003) Chs. 2 and 3

Monday 2/9: Crosslinguistic Influences: Ortega: Ch. 3

Analyzing learner language: Tarone and Swierzbin Ch. 3

Essay 2 due

Monday 2/16: The Linguistics Environment: Ortega: Ch. 4

Handbook of SLA (2012) Chs. 1 and 2

Data analysis 1 due

Monday 2/23: Cognition: Ortega: Ch. 5

Handbook of SLA (2012) Ch. 5

Abstract due

Spring break

Monday 2/23: Midterm examination

Cognition (cont.): Handbook of SLA (2012) Ch. 12 and (2003) Ch. 13

Monday 3/9: Development of Learner Language: Ortega: Ch. 6

Analyzing learner language: Tarone and Swierzbin: Ch. 4

Essay 3 due

Monday 3/16: Foreign Language Aptitude: Ortega: Ch. 7

Analyzing learner language: Tarone and Swierzbin: Ch. 5

Data analysis 2 due

Monday 3/23: Motivation: Ortega: Ch. 8

Analyzing learner language: Tarone and Swierzbin: Ch. 6

Monday 3/30: Affect and other individual differences: Ortega: Ch. 9

Analyzing learner language: Tarone and Swierzbin: Ch. 7

Data analysis 3 due

Monday 4/6: Social dimensions of L2 learning: Ortega: Ch. 10

Handbook of SLA (2012) Ch. 4

Draft literature review and methodology due

Monday 4/13: General conclusions (Reading TBD)

Data analysis 4 due

Monday 4/20: Poster session: Final projects

Final papers due: Mon. April 27 at 6 pm. – early submissions gladly accepted!

N.B. I reserve the right to change the calendar for pedagogical purposes.