

**TESL 523: Second Language Acquisition**  
Spring 2008

Instructor: Dr. Younghee Sheen  
Class Time and Location: Thursday 5:30-8:00 pm, Asbury 218, 1/17 - 05/01  
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Office hours: Wednesday and Thursday 2-5pm

**Goals:**

1. To familiarize students with the key constructs that inform the study of L2 acquisition.
2. To review relevant literature on second language acquisition.
3. To develop students' ability to relate their understanding of how learners acquire an L2 to language pedagogy
4. To enable students to develop a classroom research project that draws on SLA research and theory.

**Required Textbooks:**

1. VanPatten, B. & Williams, B. (2007). *Theories in Second Language Acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (referred to as V&W in the course outline)
2. Lightbown, P. & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned*. Oxford University Press. (referred to as L&S)
3. Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA Research and Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press. (referred to as RE)

**Recommended textbooks:**

1. Hinkel, E. (2005). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
2. Mackey, A. (2007). *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition*. Oxford University Press.

**Additional required readings (available on Blackboard and/or through Electronic Journals):**  
See course outline.

**Course requirements and grade evaluation:**

1. Attendance and participation: 10 points
2. In-class quizzes and/or assignments: 20 points (students will be given periodic quizzes testing their understanding of key constructs in SLA)
3. Final paper presentation: 10 points
4. Choose final paper either A or B. (Midterm project-20 points and Final paper -40 points, see details below)

A. Literature review

\* Choose one of the following areas for the literature review:

1. Order and sequence of L2 acquisition
2. Interaction and L2 acquisition
3. Consciousness in L2 acquisition

- \* Prepare an outline of the literature review (students identify between five and ten articles related to the topic of their lit review and create a 3-4 page max, double-spaced outline for their review that synthesizes the findings of the studies): Midterm project-20 points
- \* Write the literature review and include a consideration of the implications of the research for language teaching. (15 pages max, double-spaced, excluding references): Final paper-40 points

Criteria for final paper assessment:

1. Have you provided a clear and relevant title for your literature review?
2. Have you identified and explained the theoretical issues that inform the articles/chapters you have chosen to review?
3. Have you identified and described the key issues addressed in the articles?
4. Have you summarized and synthesized the findings of the studies in relation to each of the issues?
5. On the basis of your summaries, have you reached a conclusion relating to each issue?
6. Have you included a consideration of the pedagogical relevance of the research you have reviewed?
7. Have you cited and referenced the articles in accordance with APA?
8. Have you included relevant information and evidence from the articles/chapters to support key points you wish to make?
9. Have you made effective use of headings in your paper?

B. Classroom research project

- \* Prepare a proposal for a classroom research study (3-4 page max double-spaced): Midterm project-20 points
- \* Carry out the project and write up a report of the study including an abstract (15 page max, double-spaced, references and appendix excluded): Final paper-40 points

Criteria for final paper assessment:

1. Have you provided a clear and relevant title for your study?
2. Have you included an abstract (250 words max) that adequately summarizes your study?
3. Have you included a brief literature review that contextualizes your study and informs your research questions?
4. Are your research questions clearly stated?
5. In the method section, have you described the participants, indicated what kind of design the study has, described the instruments and procedures and explained how you would analyze the data you have collected to answer your questions?

6. In the results section, have you presented your results clearly in accordance with the conventions for quantitative or qualitative research?
7. In the discussion section, have you answered your research questions by interpreting what your results have shown?
8. In the conclusion, have you considered the limitations of your study and areas for future research?
9. Have you cited and referenced the articles in accordance with APA?

### Grading Scale

A = 94-100 pts

A- = 90-93

B+ = 86-89

B = 80-85

B- = 75-79

C = 70-74

D = 60-69

F = below 60pts

## Course Outline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Reading requirements &amp; assignments</b>
1/17 (Week 1)	What is a theory?	-V&W Ch. 1 -L&S Ch. 2 -Long, M. (1990). The least a second language acquisition theory needs to explain. <i>TESOL Quarterly</i> 24, 649-666. (See also L&S Ch. 6 for a general review of SLA).
1/24 (Week 2)	Early theories in SLA.	-V&W Ch. 2 -L&S Ch. 4 -Dulay, H. and Burt, M. (1978). Some remarks on creativity in language acquisition. In W. Ritchie (Ed.). <i>Second language Acquisition Research</i> . New York: Academic Press.
1/31 (Week 3)	Interaction and L2 acquisition	-V&W Ch. 10 -Gass, S. and Varonis, E. (1994). Input, interaction and second language production. <i>Studies in Second Language Acquisition</i> 16, 283-302. -Mackey, A (2007). The role of conversational interaction in second language acquisition. In A. Mackey (Ed.). <i>Conversational interaction in second language acquisition</i> (pp.1-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2/7 (Week 4)	The role of consciousness in L2 acquisition	-Schmidt, R and Frota, S. (1986). Developing basic conversational ability in a second language: A case

		<p>study of an adult learner of Portuguese. In R. Day (Ed.). <i>Talking to learn: Conversation in second language acquisition</i> (pp. 237-326). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.</p> <p>-Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.). <i>Cognition and Second Language Instruction</i> (pp. 3-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p>
2/14 (Week 5)	Sociocultural theory and L2 acquisition: Quiz #1	<p>-V&amp;W Ch. 11</p> <p>-Nassaji, H. and Swain, M. (2000). A Vygotskian perspective on corrective feedback in L2: The effect of random versus negotiated help in the learning of English articles. <i>Language Awareness</i> 9, 34-51.</p>
2/21 (Week 6)	Skill-learning theory	<p>-V&amp;W Ch. 6</p> <p>-DeKeyser, R. (1998). Beyond focus on form: Cognitive perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In C. Doughty and J. Williams (Eds.). <i>Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition</i> (pp. 42-63). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p>
2/28 (Week 7)	Input processing theory	<p>-V&amp;W Ch. 7</p> <p>-VanPatten, B. and Cadierno, T. (1993). SLA as Input Processing: A Role for Instruction. <i>Studies in Second Language Acquisition</i> 15, 225-243.</p>
3/6 (Week 8)	Processability theory  APA referencing	<p>-V&amp;W Ch. 8</p> <p>-Spada, N. and Lightbown, P. (1999). Instruction, first language influence, and developmental readiness in second language acquisition. <i>Modern Language Journal</i> 83, 1-22.</p> <p><b>Submit your topic for final assignment by 3/5 4pm.</b> Note: email to <a href="mailto:sheen@american.edu">sheen@american.edu</a> by pasting your topic into email message.</p>
3/13 (Week 9)	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	
3/20 (Week 10)	SLA research in the classroom	<p>-RE Ch. 1, Ch. 8 and Ch.9.</p> <p>-L&amp;S Ch. 5</p>
3/27 (Week 11)	A theory of instructed L2 acquisition	<p>-RE Ch. 4 and Ch. 5</p> <p><b>Submit your lit review outline or your classroom study proposal by 3/26 4pm.</b> Note: send email to <a href="mailto:sheen@american.edu">sheen@american.edu</a> as a single attachment. <b>No late work is accepted.</b></p>

4/3 (Week 12)	Form-focused instruction and L2 acquisition (1): types of instruction	-RE Ch. 3 -Norris, J. and Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 Instruction: A Research Synthesis and Quantitative Meta-analysis. <i>Language Learning</i> 50, 417-528. -Spada, N. and Lightbown, P. (in press). Form-focused instruction: Integrated or isolated? <i>TESOL Quarterly</i>
4/10 (Week 13)	Form-focused instruction and L2 acquisition (2): corrective feedback Quiz #2	-RE Ch. 6 -Sheen, Y. (2004). Corrective feedback and learner uptake in communicative classrooms across instructional settings. <i>Language Teaching Research</i> 8, 263-300. - Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of corrective feedback, language aptitude and learner attitudes on the acquisition of English articles, In A. Mackey (Ed.). <i>Conversational interaction in second language acquisition</i> (pp. 301-322). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4/17 (Week 14)	Review: Second language learning in the classroom	L&S Ch. 6
4/24 (Week 15)	Paper presentations	<b>Submit your final assignment by 4/23 4pm</b> Note: send email to <a href="mailto:sheen@american.edu">sheen@american.edu</a> as a single attachment. <b>No late work is accepted.</b>
5/1 (Week 16)	Paper presentations & wrap-up	