This course is an introduction to second language acquisition. The course is designed to be accessible to students from a wide variety of backgrounds and no previous linguistics course. This course will address issues related to how second language is learned both by children and adults. It has both theoretical and practical components to address understanding of second language learning. We will look at the major schools of thought and concepts that underpin the field of second language acquisition. This course will also address some issues related to classroom-based second language instruction.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the semester, the student will be able to

1. describe and compare historical and contemporary approaches to SLA,
   
   Evidence: quizzes, class discussion, assignments

2. integrate basic principles and terminology of language analysis into coursework,
   
   Evidence: in-class activities, assignments, diary study

3. demonstrate understanding of what is involved in the acquisition and development of language including its biological and social foundations (e.g., individual differences), and
   
   Evidence: in-class activities, quizzes, assignments, diary study

4. make connections between theory and research on second language learning and teaching to classroom practices.
   
   Evidence: in-class activities, quizzes, class discussion, assignments

**Required Text**


Hard copy or e-copy

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two quizzes @ 15 points each</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diary study paper</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Assignments</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total possible:</td>
<td>100 percent</td>
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A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=below 60

**Quizzes**
There will be two quizzes which will cover material from the book, assigned readings, and classroom discussions.

**Diary and Diary Study**

One of the best ways to study language acquisition is through introspection. In order to provide you with a second language experience, the class will learn beginning Gaelic. After each class, you will take 5-10 minutes to record your feelings about the lesson. These may include reactions to classroom tasks, preferred activities, language development, and the variables (e.g., motivation, anxiety) that you felt promoted or inhibited your language learning. You will not be graded for your ability to learn Gaelic. This is solely an exercise through which you will examine the processes which you found to underlie your language acquisition (or lack of).

At the end of the semester, you will write a paper based on your observations and introspections. You will use your diary to relate your language learning process to the variables discussed in this course (particularly Chapter 8). Your diary will function as the starting point from which you will explore more intensely one specific aspect of the language learning process. For example, if motivation seems to be an important indicator of success (or failure) in language learning, your paper should include a short review of the literature on motivation and use excerpts from your own language learning experience in the class to illustrate the impact of that variable. The paper should be 5-6 pages with a minimum of 4 resources.

**Language Assignments**

You will have three Language Assignments that are described at the end of the syllabus.

**Homework**

There will be a number of short in-class worksheets and homework assignments of a practical nature. These will be reading responses, survey development, and discussion questions. These worksheets and assignments will be graded as follows:

3 Exceeds expectations  
2 As expected  
1 Below expectations  
0 Either no submission OR far below expectations

**Attendance and Participation**

Regular attendance is required in this course. Your quizzes will cover material in book and discussions, so attendance is vital to your success in this class. Also quizzes cannot be made up, so if you are absent and miss one, you will receive a zero. You will lose a participation point for each absence (1 “free” absence).
General comments

In order to do well in this course, you will need to attend every class as quizzes include material discussed in class. If you are having trouble with the coursework, it is important that you talk to me immediately so that we can make a plan to help you succeed in the course.

Tentative Syllabus

Week 1: Discuss syllabus, assignments, intro to SLA research & methods, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, & Chapter 3
   Homework
   Read: pp. 1-53
   Write: Self-assessment questions; Language Assignment #1; start diary
   Language Study

Week 2: Chapter 4 & Chapter 8
   7/14 Homework
   Read: pp. 59-96; 194-214
   Write: Self-assessment questions; diary;
   Language Study

Week 3: Chapter 5 & Chapter 6
   7/21 Homework
   Read: pp. 105-168
   Write: Self-assessment questions; diary, paper proposal; Language Assignment #2
   Language Study

Week 4: Chapter 7
   7/28 Homework
   Read: pp. 169-189
   Write: Self-assessment questions; paper outline; Language Assignment #3
   Language Study

Week 5: Review, Quiz #2
   8/4 Homework
   Read: Review
   Write: Final paper

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an F on the assigned work.
**Classroom/professional behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

**Disabilities Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Language Assignments**

**Language Assignment #1**

**Reflecting on Personal Language Learning Experience(s)**

To better understand the language acquisition process, it is relevant to think back on our own personal experiences. In a one and a half to two page paper, describe your language learning experience(s). You may want to consider including the following information in your paper: where you learned the language (U.S. vs country of target language), how you learned the language (classroom vs natural),
how successful was the language learning/teaching technique (teaching style/teaching approach/method)
how good a language learner you think you are (and why),
what language learning environment you think would make the language learning process the easiest (the least painful)

You can (and should) include anecdotal information--your successes and frustrations! Be prepared to share your experiences.

**Language Assignment #2**

Find someone (an “informant”) who has taken Gaelic language classes. First get the basic information about the language learning situation: the number of years (months) that Gaelic was studied; where it was studied (elementary school, etc.); and at what ages she studied it. Ask your informant how successful the language learning experience was in terms of final language proficiency. If she does not feel that it was successful, pursue a line of questioning about the reasons for the failure. If she feels that it was successful, investigate the reasons for that success (according to the language learner). Ask her if she thinks Gaelic is important to know. Finally, ask your informant to give you a one sentence reason for why (or why not) she feels that it is (not) important. Write a 1 ½ to 2-page report on your findings.

**Language Assignment #3**

What kinds of teaching approaches has your Gaelic teacher been using? What type of correction techniques are used? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches/correction techniques? Write a 1-page report that references the reading in Chapter 5 (use the terminology provided in that chapter).