

LT5460: STUDIES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Studies of Second Language Acquisition

Subject Code

LT - Linguistics and Translation

Course Number

5460

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to provide an overview of the history and current state of second language acquisition (SLA) studies. Through discussion and review of theoretical studies on human minds and the nature of language, as well as those on pedagogical practices and language education, students will become research literate in empirical studies of SLA, and will be equipped with tools for understanding and evaluating SLA research in terms of scope, methodology, findings, and implications in various aspects. Moreover, the course reviews principles and processes involved in researching SLA, so that students will be able to design and conduct their own studies on topics and issues of relevance to SLA.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	To describe and evaluate major theories and models in second language acquisition.		x	x	
2	To explain and criticize the methodology and findings of studies in the field.		x	x	
3	To identify and analyse issues relevant to second language learning and thereby prepare to conduct research on their own.		x	x	x
4	To apply theoretical research to practical issues in language development and education.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will engage in studying key concepts and theories relating to second language acquisition, as well as the implications of research findings to language education.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Tutorials	Students will participate in hands-on exercises and take-home assignments on linguistic issues in second language acquisition, and engage in discussion of research and article review.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Quizzes: Students will participate in in-class quizzes that comprise a combination of multiple-choice, data-set, and/or short-answer questions.	1, 2, 3, 4	60	This is a summative assessment task.	No
2	Term Paper: Students will write up a term paper including literature review of a research topic or issue in second language acquisition, and a research proposal on how the topic/issue can be further investigated or examined from a new perspective.	1, 2, 3, 4	40	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, format references, and edit language. Students should NOT use GenAI tools for (re)solving the central problems or issues addressed in the paper. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the content from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the paper and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Quizzes

Criterion

Accuracy and clarity in analysis and organization

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent grades in each quiz.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Overall, good grades in quizzes.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Overall, average grades in quizzes.

Marginal

(D) Well below-average grades in quizzes.

Failure

(F) Unable to fulfil any requirements above; unable to complete or fail most or all assessments.

Assessment Task

Term Paper

Criterion

Subject relevance, originality, and contribution to the field, as well as academic writing skills.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Highly relevant and original research ideas, outstanding grasp of the nature of theories and implications. In writing, demonstration of outstanding definition and discussion on theoretical issues and well-supported proposal, well-organized and fluent presentation of one's ideas; analytical discussion on others' viewpoints and presentations.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Quite relevant and original research ideas, good grasp of the nature of theories and implications. In writing demonstration of good definition and discussion on theoretical issues and well-supported proposal and well-organized and fluent presentation of one's ideas; analytical discussion on others' viewpoints and presentations.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Somewhat relevant and marginally original ideas, clear grasp of the nature of theories and implications. In writing demonstration of clear definition and discussion on theoretical issues and supported proposal, organized and fluent presentation of one's ideas; analytical discussion on others' viewpoints and presentations.

Marginal

(D) Lack of clear ideas and grasp of the nature of theories and implications. In writing lack of demonstration of definition and discussion on theoretical issues and proposal lacking support and organization; little analytical discussion on others' viewpoints and presentations.

Failure

(F) Unable to fulfil any requirements above; unable to complete or fail most or all assessments.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Second language acquisition, research methodology, language development, language education

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Gass S., and Selinker L., (2008). Second language acquisition: an introductory course. Routledge.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Brown, J. D., (1995). Understanding research in second language learning. CUP.
2	Gass S., and Schachter, J., (2008). Linguistic perspectives on second language acquisition. CUP.