

4800: SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

This course is for teachers and prospective teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL), including undergraduates seeking a specialization in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), credentialed K-12 teachers seeking SDAIE certification, and teachers in bilingual education settings. Course content is equally relevant for teachers of any foreign language seeking to investigate how theory informs method in the language classroom.

Through both written and oral modes, students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of the following topics and be able to articulate their relevance to the teaching and learning of a second language:

- * how first and second language acquisition theories relate to various methods and approaches to language teaching;
- * how variables of age, motivation, sex, experience, cognitive styles and learning strategies influence language learning;
- * how sociocultural factors influence language learning, especially among English language learners in our schools;
- * how personal and affective factors influence language learning;
- * how contrastive analysis, interlanguage and error analysis are used in designing and evaluating curriculum, and
- * how the theories of Chomsky, Krashen, Cummins, and others have influenced teaching methodology.

REQUIRED TEXT AND PACKET

Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, Fifth Edition (Fourth will do),
H. Douglas Brown, Prentice Hall Regents, 2007

Packet of readings (provided, or Dept. Of English: cost \$12.00)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and participation: Interaction, exchange of ideas and experiences, and group work are essential aspects of this course. There is a “grace” of one absence (i.e., three hours), after that, each absence will cost 40 points. Remember: You miss a class, you miss a week.

(Weight: 200 points)

2. Summaries and Responses to readings: Four times during the semester you will be required to hand in typed summaries and responses to the readings (summary minimum two pages, single-spaced: graduates, three pages; response minimum two pages double-spaced, graduates, three pages). The summary is your brief definitions of the key concepts; the response consists of an essay on personal opinions and reactions (agree, disagree, how it relates, or doesn't, to your

experience). There are four summary/responses; each is worth 50 points. (Weight: 200 points)

3. **Demonstration/Discussion:** Working individually or in pairs, students will present an activity or a technique that is appropriate for certain levels of second language proficiency. Each demonstration will last about fifteen minutes and be followed by a discussion of the pros and cons. Handouts for all students. Credit/no-credit only. (Weight: 200 points)

4. **Case Study:** Each student will draft an 8- to 10- page report (graduates: 12-15 p.) on a second language acquisition experience and relate that case to the theories studied in this class. Model studies will be shown in class, and we will discuss this case study at length. (Weight: 200 points)

5. **Final Exam (200 points):** A series a brief identification essays on the key concepts of the course. These concepts will be chosen and discussed in advance by the class. (Weight: 200 points)

POINT SYSTEM FOR GRADING

1. <u>Attendance and participation:</u> (each absence-after one grace-will cost 40 points)	200 points
2. <u>Written summaries/responses of readings:</u> Half points on late summaries/responses: 4 responses x 50 points	200 points
3. <u>Case study</u> Graded using the rubric in the packet	200 points
4. <u>Lesson presentation:</u> Individual or group presentation of a lesson (Cr/No Cr)	200 points
5. <u>In class final exam:</u> blue book in class	<u>200 points</u>
TOTAL	1000 points

POINT SYSTEM FOR GRADING

980 - 1000	= A	960 - 979	= A-	900 - 919	= B-
940 - 959	= B+	920 - 939	= B	840 - 859	= C-
880 - 899	= C+	860 - 879	= C	780 - 799	= D-
820 - 839	= D+	800 - 819	= D		
below 779	=				

Portfolio of “Summaries” and “Responses”

One of the major goals of this course is that you learn the lexicon (vocabulary, concepts, and principles) related to basic linguistics, second language acquisition, methods, and, most importantly, to the language teaching/learning process. A second goal is that you demonstrate how to relate these concepts and methods to the real world of education, especially in the context of your own experience and observations. There is a basic premise here that “the more you learn

about language learning, the better teacher you will be.” Thus, these writing activities serve as both a learning strategy (for you) and an assessment strategy (for us).

This summary/response (S and R) component of the course is designed to do the following: 1) the summaries help you study the text and make sense out of the key concepts, and 2) the responses give you the opportunity to freely express your personal views and opinions about selected topics of personal interest to you in an “expository essay.”

In your packets for this course there are four “key concepts” lists. These lists are meant as guidelines for the reading of the text. They highlight the most important principles and concepts in second language acquisition, as defined by H.D.Brown, the author of our text, or, in some cases, by our packets. There is a lot of information about these concepts in the packet, including some excellent handouts prepared by students in TESOL Methods or Second Language Acquisition classes. This text is an extensive survey of many fields related to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and you may find some of the terms rather complex or ambiguous; thus, feel free to use the Internet to find clearer explanations and examples of the concepts.

In the *summaries* we ask you to follow the key concepts lists that are provided and write at least one or two sentences summarizing the meaning of each concept, and give examples whenever possible. For example:

Icebreakers: An activity that is designed to introduce teachers and students or to prepare students for the lessons in a fun, informal way. For example, in the 4800 class we use personal interviews to learn about all the students in the class and later we do an icebreaker called “Find Someone who...”

After completing this for all the key concepts listed, choose any one or more of the concepts, or a topic that we discuss in class, and write a personal critique or “response,” giving your personal interpretation of the concept and its importance in your own experience. For example, after completing your summaries that include descriptions of the “grammar-translation approach” in foreign language teaching, you might choose to write an essay evaluating your experience (either positive or negative) in a high school or college foreign language course.

You are asked to do this four times during the semester. Use the key concepts lists in the packet as a guide. The due dates are listed below and on the class calendar. On the date due, please submit your summaries (Ss) together with your personal responses. They will typically be four to six pages in length — about 2-4 pages, single-spaced, for your summaries, and 2 pages, double-spaced, for your responses. These should be submitted in a folder so that you can place all your summaries and responses together, and they will be cumulative. Thus, at the end of the term, you will have a portfolio of all your summaries and responses during the course of the semester. This will serve as your study guide, and be useful for certain future classes in the Credential program.

The Responses (Rs) represent an opportunity to express your personal views and improve your writing skills. On the responses, we will make many suggestions for style, punctuation, editing, and grammar. Thus, you get “free feedback” on your writing (and an opportunity to eliminate

problems before the case study, which will be graded in a formal manner using the rubric in your packet). In certain cases, you will be required to respond to the corrections with an analysis of the corrections we make. (For example, if we put in a comma, you would explain that “the comma was necessary because....”)

We will read each of these Ss and Rs carefully and return them to you with comments, questions, and recommendations. I encourage you to dialogue with us in your pages. These summaries/responses will be assigned checks with numbers (check plus = 24-25, check = 23-22, check minus = 21-20, etc.). We may make recommendations for improvement if they fall short of expectations (in either form or content). This is a senior-level English class, so your writing is an important factor. We may even ask you to rewrite some portions if they are too far off the mark. If they are handed in up to a week late, you can still get half points. **I will not accept submissions by e-mail.** Late work must be turned into me or the English department. The secretary will stamp it with the submission date.