

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PH.D. PROGRAM



Course Descriptions

82-783 Second Language Acquisition: Theories and Research

This course reviews the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in order to provide students with an understanding of the way in which second languages are learned and acquired. The course will survey various theories of second language acquisition (e.g., Innateness and Universal Grammar, Connectionism, Input/Output, sociocultural theory), and their claims will be examined in the light of recent research findings. The course will also examine the impact of internal and external variables on second language acquisition and development. Some topics include the role of learning environment for language acquisition, explanations for differences in success among second language learners, variations in second language use, and the effect of classroom instruction on second language acquisition. The course also aims to compare methodologies, contexts, and results of the various studies, categorizing patterns and tendencies in their approaches to research, as well as the results of the research.

82-881 Research Methods in SLA

This course introduces the key concepts of research methodology and design. It also focuses on understanding the basic principles in research design; developing a range of skills to design empirical studies; developing competence in evaluating and critiquing varying types of database studies; and familiarizing students with major research paradigms used in SLA. Students will develop competencies in formulating theoretically motivated research questions, designing appropriate data collection/analysis procedures, providing a legitimate rationale for the data collection and analysis procedures, reviewing database SLA studies, and postulating specific implications for their proposed research.

82-885 Introduction to Qualitative Methods

This course focuses on the theoretical and practical principles that guide qualitative inquiry in second language and multilingual contexts. The course provides students the opportunity to explore in-depth data collection and analysis tools (e.g., interviews, participant observation, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, etc.). In addition, students reflect upon the ethics and style in research reporting characteristic in this approach. The course is grounded on individual

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research projects conducted by students during the course of the semester.

82-780 Graduate Research Seminar

The goal of the seminar is to provide a forum to discuss ongoing research. All graduate students and faculty in the program present their ongoing projects and receive constructive feedback in a positive learning environment. Students also participate in professional development workshops to get involved in activities typical of the SLA field. This seminar meets every week during each semester and is facilitated by faculty members and a committee of graduate students who rotate each semester.