SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS
LALS 520, Learners and Second Language Learning

TRIMESTER 2 2010
12 July to 13 November 2010

Trimester dates
Teaching dates: 19 July 2010 to 8 October 2010
Mid-trimester break: 23 August to 5 September 2010

Withdrawal dates
Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

Names and contact details:
Course coordinator
Dr. Averil Coxhead

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Course Administrator

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Class times and location:
Thursdays, 1:10-3:00
24 KP 201

Announcements:
LALS main office: VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Web contact: www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz

Course delivery
The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On campus classes are run as workshops. For distance students, the course is available at http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz. Blackboard is Victoria's online teaching and learning system. In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in activities and discussions. Further information about Blackboard is available under Frequently Asked Questions, under the Study tab of the School website.

Communication of additional information
Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in on campus classes and posted on the course website in Blackboard.

Course content
LALS 520 explores the role of learner characteristics in language acquisition as well as current issues of interest in instructed SLA. In particular the course addresses selected issues in linguistics, psychology and education that bear on the abilities of children and adults to understand and use second languages, especially in educational settings. The topics provide analyses of how acquisition problems are solved by learners and of the factors that constrain or facilitate second language development. Finally, the applications of language acquisition research are considered in the field of second language pedagogy.

This course relates closely to LALS 514 (Language Learning Processes) which is usually taught in the first trimester; we would encourage students with an interest in second language acquisition (SLA) research to complete both courses. LALS 514 focuses a broad range of theoretical approaches to understanding second language development.

LALS 520 provides class members with opportunities to study:

a.   The influence of cognitive processes on language learning
b.   Individual variables and their influence on language acquisition
c.   Connections between SLA research and language teaching.

Learning objectives
By the end of the semester, students will:
a.   Be knowledgeable about the research related to instructed second language acquisition, particularly with reference to the learning of linguistic form in an instructed setting.
b.   Understand individual differences and their influence on language acquisition.
c.   Be able to apply knowledge from objectives (a) and (b) to analyse information about individual differences and instructed SLA.

An outline of the topics for each week and expected readings will be provided in the first week of the course and on BlackBoard.

Expected workload
It is anticipated that you will invest a minimum of 12 hours per week on this course, including lecture attendance for on campus students. However, in order to achieve a high grade in the course, most students will find it necessary to spend more time on this course.

Readings
Essential text

Ortega, L. (2009). Understanding second language acquisition. London: Hodder (available from Student Notes)

For the first two weeks of trimester all postgraduate textbooks will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. Customers can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Assessment requirements
The following table outlines the assessment components for LALS 520:

	Component	Value	Word count	Due date	Learning objectives
1.	Case study report	50%	1800-2200	Thursday 19 August	a, b, c
2.	Presentation of an issue in SLA	50%	n/a	Thursday 14 October	b, c

The purpose of these assessment components is to allow you to investigate in depth topics of your choosing from the course. Details of the assessments will be given out in the first class on campus and posted on BlackBoard at the beginning of the first week of the course.

Deadlines
If you find that you need an extension, you **must** get explicit permission from the course coordinator before the due date. No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. Extensions will only be granted when the assignment is not completed due to unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or family emergencies. Work submitted on time will be marked and commented on in a timely manner. Work submitted late **for any reason** will be marked at the instructor's convenience, and will receive few, if any, comments.

Penalties
As noted above, late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Plagiarism will result in failure in the course. Note: work handed in on-time will be marked with comments in a reasonable timeframe. Work handed in late will be marked when possible, comments may or may not be given.

Submitting assignments and tasks

Distance members of the course - submit your assignments through the Blackboard (BB) system. Instructions on how to use the BB assignment tool are on the BB website. As a backup measure only, assignments may be submitted as e-mail attachments to lals-ma@vuw.ac.nz.

On campus students - submit a hardcopy to the School office or submit electronically through BB.

Instructions for the submission of the first assignment will be distributed in the first week of class.

General guidelines

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section)
- Use the cover sheet at the end of this document

Hard copy submissions

- Type on one side of A4 paper
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves

Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

To meet Mandatory Course Requirements, each course member is required to do the following work:

1. Complete weekly reading requirements in preparation for classes.
2. Complete all assessment requirements.
3. Attend eight out of ten classes.

Class representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source

- The work of other students or staff

- Information from the internet

- Software programs and other electronic material

- Designs and ideas

- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

Use of Turnitin
Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES
Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx