



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**LALS 520: LEARNERS AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING**

**TRIMESTER 2 2012**

**16 July to 17 November 2012**

**Trimester dates**

**Teaching dates: 23 July to 14 October 2012**

Mid-trimester break: 27 August to 9 September 2012

Last piece of assessment due: 22 October. This is in Study Week, as there is no exam.

Study Week: 22-26 October 2012

Examination/Assessment Period: 26 October to 17 November 2012

**Withdrawal dates**

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

**Names and contact details**

**Course coordinator**

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**MA course administration at LALS:**

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### **Class times and locations**

Wednesdays 13.10 – 15.00

Murphy, room 303.

### **Teaching learning summary**

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 prescription**

This course looks at the role of the learner and the effect of individual differences on second language learning. Issues such as learner motivation, affect, aptitude and learner response to feedback are explored.

### **Course content**

LALS 520 explores the role of learner characteristics and other determinants 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.

LALS 520 provides students 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**

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Identify variables (including learner traits) that have been found to influence the pace and nature of second language acquisition.
2. Advise others on language education issues by drawing from research findings.
3. Recognize gaps in the SLA research and propose avenues for further research in SLA.
4. Apply SLA research findings to critically appraise classroom practices.

### Expected workload

It is anticipated that students will invest 150 hours in this course, which includes attending classes / contributing to the discussion board on Blackboard, reading the essential and recommended texts, and preparing the assessment items.

### Readings

#### Set texts:

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding second language acquisition*. London: Hodder  
Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard.

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 9–27 July 2012, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto: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.

### Recommended reading:

Recommended articles to supplement Ortega (2009) will be made available on Blackboard.

### Assessment requirements

The following table outlines the assessment components for LALS 520:

	Component	Value	Word count	Due date	Learning objectives
1.	Advising on an issue in language education	30%	1500	10 September	2, 3
2.	A case study report, comparing two learners	30%	1500	8 October	1, 3
3.	A critical appraisal of a classroom practice	30%	1500	22 October	4, 3
4.	Responses to questions posted on Blackboard	10%	N/A	N/A	1, 2, 3, 4

The purpose of these assessment components is to allow you to investigate in depth topics of your choosing from the course, and to explore the pedagogical implications of the research findings discussed in 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 course.

## **Penalties**

No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Also consult the course coordinator in case your text exceeds the word limit. Without prior arrangements in that regard, the course coordinator maintains the right to give only minimal feedback on the text.

## **Mandatory course requirements**

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- Submit all three assignments
- Attend at least 8 of the 10 two-hour sessions (campus students)
- Respond to all 10 questions posted on Blackboard by the instructor (distance students).

## **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.

### **Where to find more detailed information**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study). Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx>. Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the Academic Office website, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).