

Second Language Acquisition

Seminar Details: 704, 801, 802, 803, BiLi	Contact Details:
Module Code & Title: MA	
Level: MA	Instructor: Albert Biel
Credits: 3/4	Email: albert.biel@tu-dortmund.de
Academic Year: 2020/21	Office hour: tuesdays 15:30-16:30
Day/Time: Mondays 16:00 – 18:00	<i>To book a slot in my (virtual) office hour, please message me, and I will provide you with my digital contacts and a time slot</i>
Room: - until further notice – online	

Course Aims

This course aims to introduce students to the multifaceted field of second language acquisition (SLA) and provides them with an overview of central approaches. The three main questions dealt with in this course are “What exactly does the L2 learner come to know? How does the learner acquire this knowledge? Why are some learners more successful than others?” (Saville-Troike & Barto 2017: ix). Incorporating linguistic, psychological and sociological perspectives, this seminar explores the multi-layered processes involved in acquiring a new language. Furthermore, this course discusses the relevance of SLA research and theory for language teaching.

Research-oriented, this course also introduces key concepts of research methodology, and thereby equips students with the tools to investigate SLA-related issues in their own research projects.

Further details about assessment and literature will be provided in the first session.

References:

Saville-Troike, M., & Barto, K. (2017). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. (3rd Edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Learning Goals

After finishing this class, students can

- connect, compare and evaluate different theories and perspectives on SLA.
- apply their knowledge of SLA to their own teaching.
- differentiate and evaluate different research methods in applied linguistics and SLA.
- carry out small research projects on their own.

Procedure

The course takes place live and online via Zoom.

Assessment Details

Decide on a topic related to SLA that you would like to do your own research on. You can choose between a qualitative or quantitative approach. Please pick on something that is feasible within the given timeframe.

Research proposal

Present your research in form of a PowerPoint presentation (5min). The presentation should include a research question, your chosen methodology (data collection and analysis), and 4-5 key references for your project. The presentations are to be held in week 10 and 11.

Research report

Write up your research in a report. The report should be 8-12 pages long and include an introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion. For more information on how to write an empirical paper, see my Guidelines for Academic Papers in Applied Linguistics (on Moodle). The deadline is 1st September, 23.59.

Course outline

	Date	Topic	How?
Week 1	12 th April	Introduction, Course Structure, Definition, Key Questions	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 1)
Week 2	19 th April	First language acquisition / L1 and L2	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 2)
Week 3	26 th April	Linguistic perspectives on SLA I	Saville-Troike & Barto 2017 Ch 3 (33-70)
Week 4	3 rd May	Linguistic Perspectives on SLA II	Hall & Cook (2012)
Week 5	10 th May	Psychological Perspectives on SLA I	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 4, pp. 71-87)
Week 6	17 th May	Psychological Perspectives on SLA II	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 4, pp. 87-104) Ellis & Wulff (2015)
Week 7	24 th May	Reading Week: Research methodology in SLA (no class)	
Week 8	31 st May	Sociological Perspectives on SLA I	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 5, pp. 105-126)
Week 9	7 th June	Sociological Perspectives on SLA II	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 5, pp. 126-140)
All-day	12 th June	Research Technologies Workshop (highly recommended)	
Week 10	14 th June	Guest lecture: Ivonne Weyers, M.A. (Universität Wien)	
Week 11	21 st June	Research Projects I	

Week 12	28 th June	Research Projects II	
Week 13	5 th July	Competence and performance	Saville-Troike & Barto (2017, ch. 6)
Week 14	12 th July	The Role of Teaching in SLA	Spada (2014)
Week 15	19 th July	Research Projects III	

The workshop on Research Technologies is not obligatory, but I strongly recommend joining. The programme will be published next week.

Readings

- Ellis, N. C. & Wulff, S. (2015). Usage-based approaches to SLA. In VanPatten, B. and Williams, J. (eds), *Theories in second language acquisition. An introduction*. London: Routledge. 75-93.
- Hall, G. and Cook, G. (2012). Own-language use in language teaching and learning: state of the art. *Language Teaching*, 45, 3. 271-308.
- Saville-Troike, M. and Barto, K. (2017). *Introducing second language acquisition* (3rd edn). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spada, N. (2014). Instructed second language acquisition research and its relevance for L2 teacher education. *Education Matters: The Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 2, 1. 41-54.