The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
Second Term of 2024-25

1. Course code: LING5201
2. Title in English: Topics in Second Language Acquisition
3. Title in Chinese: 第二語言獲得專題

4. Course description
This course provides students with linguistic and cognitive perspectives on second language acquisition (SLA) in child and adult learners. It presents an overview of the field of SLA, surveys various theories and examines their claims in the light of recent research findings. Research methodology will be illustrated through representative studies and hands-on activities. Students are provided with opportunities to reflect upon their own language learning experiences, relate them to theoretical issues brought up in class, and explore the possibility of applying research findings to second language learning and teaching.

5. Learning outcomes
On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- achieve a basic understanding of how second languages are acquired, and the linguistic, cognitive and social factors affecting the acquisition path and outcomes
- appraise relevant literature of SLA critically
- develop experimental design and analysis skills for conducting SLA research

6. Course syllabus

Topics	Contents/fundamental concepts
Basics	• acquisition and learning, naturalistic vs. instructed settings, spoken vs. written modalities • first language (L1), second language (L2), foreign language, interlanguage, target language, child vs. adult L2 acquisition • age of onset, critical/sensitive period, fossilization • developmental sequences, developmental stages, morpheme orders, U-shaped development • initial state, rate of development, ultimate attainment
Linguistic approaches	• competence and performance, formal linguistic approaches • types of evidence in the input, input ambiguity • language transfer, cross-linguistic influence, L1 effects • morphological variability, obligatory context, cue weighting, interface properties • L3 acquisition
Cognitive approaches	• linguistic representation, access and activation • input frequency and salience, cues in the input • usage-based models, declarative and procedural memory • incidental learning • implicit learning, working memory
Social aspects	• interaction, corrective feedback, modified input, foreigner talk
Individual differences	• age effect, aptitude, motivation
SLA research	• online and offline tasks, judgment tasks, production and narration tasks, lexical decision, sound discrimination, reaction times, eye movement, standardized language tests, longitudinal and cross-sectional designs, naturalistic speech samples and controlled experiments

7. Course components:

Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face	**Percentage of time**
Lectures (hybrid no)	28 hours
Interactive tutorial (hybrid no)	14 hours
Out-of-classroom self-study	
Reading, assignment, group work	42 hours

8. Assessment type, percentage and rubrics

Task nature	Description	Weight
1. Class participation	Answer multiple-choice questions on content taught in class via Blackboard - *graded automatically by Blackboard*	**10%**
2. Quiz	Two in-class quizzes to test understanding of key concepts and theories - *graded by TA, reviewed by teacher*	**70%**
3. Oral presentation	A 5-minute oral presentation discussing a given topic in second language acquisition; student can choose whether to work alone or with 1-2 fellow students (max. 3 students per team); sign up by end of Week 6 - *managed by TA, graded by teacher*	**20%**

Attendance at lectures and tutorials is required.

9. Required and recommended readings:

Textbook

Gass, S. M., Behney, J. and Plonsky, L. (2020) Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course. Fifth edition. New York, NY: Routledge.

Articles:

Puig-Mayenco, E., González Alonso, J., & Rothman, J. (2020). A systematic review of transfer studies in third language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, *36*(1), 31-64.

Tremblay, A. (2021). The past, present, and future of lexical stress in second language speech production and perception. In Wayland, R. (Ed.) *Second Language Speech Learning*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 175–192.

Hopp, H. (2023). Sentence processing in a second language: linguistic approaches. In Godfroid, A., & Hopp, H. (Eds.) *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition and psycholinguistics*, Routledge, 216-228.

Other references (optional):

Gass, S. M., & Mackey, A. (Eds.). (2013). *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Godfroid, A., & Hopp, H. (Eds.). (2023). *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition and psycholinguistics*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Comajoan-Colomé, L. (2020). The aspect hypothesis and the acquisition of L2 past morphology in the last 20 years: A state-of-the-scholarship review. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 42(5), 1137-1167.

10. Feedback for evaluation:

Apart from the end-of-term course evaluation, the teacher and the teaching assistant welcome students' timely comments and suggestions on any aspect of the course. Email communication is

preferred. Appointment meetings can also be arranged.

11. Course schedule:

Week	Date	Topics	Readings (textbook, articles)	Question
1.	Jan 8	Introduction - Tutorial: Why is learning an L2 difficult?	Chapter 1 & 2	
2.	Jan 15	Historical overview - Tutorial: Error analysis	Chapter 3 & 4	Q1
3.	Jan 22	Formal linguistics and SLA - Tutorial: The sun and the ring	Chapter 6	Q2
4.	Jan 29	No class – Happy Chinese New Year!		
5.	Feb 5	Typological approaches to L2 - Tutorial: "The lady who I danced with her"	Chapter 7	Q3
6.	Feb 12	Temporality in L2 - Tutorial: Sophie's verb choice	Chapter 8	Q4
7.	Feb 19	**Quiz I (30%, covering content in Week 1-6)** - Presentation workshop		
8.	Feb 26	The L2 lexicon - Presentations (Topic group A)	Chapter 9	Q5
9.	Mar 5	Processing L2 sentences - Presentations (Topic group B)	Chapter 11 Hopp (2023)	Q6
10.	Mar 12	Processing L2 speech - Presentations (Topic group C)	Tremblay (2021)	Q7
11.	Mar 19	Input and interaction in the L2 - Presentations (Topic group D)	Chapter 13	Q8
12.	Mar 26	Individual differences in L2 learning - Presentations (Topic group E)	Chapter 15	Q9
13.	Apr 2	L3 and multilingual acquisition - Presentations (Topic group F)	Puig-Mayenco et al. (2020)	Q10
14.	Apr 9	Conducting research on L2 - Quiz I analysis	Chapter 2	
15.	Apr 16	**Quiz II (40%, covering content in Week 8-14)** - Consultations		

12. Contact details:
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13. Details of course website
Course website in Blackboard.

14. Academic honesty and plagiarism:
 Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. **In the case of group projects**, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality. Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher. Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.
 The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed **undeclared multiple submissions**. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.
 The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but **shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials** to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

15. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment
 All use of AI tools is prohibited in assignments and assessment tasks. For assignments and assessment tasks that count towards the final course grades, students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT). Any breach of the regulations will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty. In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.