



Universidad de Costa Rica  
Sede de Occidente

CIUDAD UNIVERSITARIA CARLOS MONGE ALFARO  
DEPARTAMENTO DE FILOSOFÍA, ARTES Y LETRAS  
SECCIÓN DE LENGUAS MODERNAS  
LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

Second Semester 2009  
COURSE CONTENTS &  
DISTRIBUTION  
(Tentative)

**IO-6020**  
**Analysis & Application**  
**of the**  
**Principles of Language Acquisition**

**Fridays 9:00 A.M. - 11:50 P.M.**

**Credits: 5**  
**Hours: 3 each week**  
**Investigating Time: 6 hours**  
**Practice Time: 6 hours**

**Instructor:** M. Ed Tamatha Rabb Andrews

**Office Hours for Attending Students:**  
TBA

**Office #:** 11 **Office Phone #:** 2437-9923  
**Cell Phone #:** 8836-4247

**e-mail:** tamcambronero@gmail.com

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to provide practicing teachers the knowledge and skills to analyze several first and second language acquisition theories and their implications in English teaching in a Costa Rican context. Students will also enrich and relate these theories to evaluate and design an effective class curriculum to successfully carry-out the teaching task in an EFL environment. The main issues to be discussed in the course are: comparison of first and second language acquisition theories, language organization and the brain, utilization of problem-solving strategies in first and second language acquisition, second language acquisition and classroom procedures.

#### **GENERAL OBJECTIVES:**

1. To stimulate critical thinking of individuals with regard to different theories of second language learning that exist in the educational setting.
2. To promote coherent and systematic methods and techniques of learning a second language based on a sociocultural reality in an educational setting.
3. To foster the creativity of individuals through the study of theories of acquisition and second language learning and applying these theories to the reality in the medium in which they operate.
4. To promote research of acquisition and second language learning through the use of technological tools.

#### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

1. To analyze theoretical reading material related to different theories of learning and acquiring a second language.
2. To assess the appropriateness of applying different theories of acquisition and second language learning to the educational environment today.

3. To analyze the consistency of methods and techniques used in the educational theory of learning and acquiring a second language.
4. To identify different environments, methods, techniques and other factors that negatively and positively influence the process of acquisition and second language learning, from theoretical and practical perspective.
5. To apply theoretical knowledge to analyze the process of teaching and learning in specific educational realities of the environment in which teachers operate.
6. To apply the theoretical models of acquisition and second language learning in an existing educational environment.
7. To discuss the results of the application of theory studied in class.
8. To identify different sources of information and tools for the investigation of theory of acquisition and second language learning.
9. To identify different theories related to the field of psycholinguistics and the possible implications of such teaching.
10. To analyze the pedagogical implications of social and affective variables involved in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language.

**COURSE CONTENTS:**

**BROWN / BILLER**

1. Language, Learning & Teaching
2. First Language Acquisition
3. Theories of L2 Acquisition
4. Age & Acquisition
5. Human Learning
6. Styles & Strategies
7. Personality Factors
8. Sociocultural Factors
9. Cross-Linguistic Influence & Learner  
Language
10. Communicative Competence
11. Strategies for Designing Brain-Friendly  
Classrooms
12. Cerebral Engagement: The Pathways to  
Memory
13. Abundant Connections
14. Neural Practice

**GRAVES**

1. Defining the Context
2. Articulating Beliefs
3. Conceptualizing Content
4. Formulating Goals & Objectives
5. Assessing Needs
6. Organizing the Course
7. Developing Materials
8. Adapting a Textbook
9. Designing an Assessment Plan

**METHODOLOGY:**

Classes are both teacher and student-centered. The professor discusses theory, provides explanations and serves as a model on each topic which will be expanded through analysis and discussion of readings prepared in advance by the students. In addition, the students will give demonstrations on the theoretical principals studied during the course. Active participation, both in practice and in peer feedback, is an essential part of the course, which includes the learner's own personal experiences as an important element to classroom learning. Students will be investigating and designing a class curriculum based on their beliefs and understandings as well as the reality of the context and what is known about their students and the principles of language acquisition.

**COURSE CONTENTS & DISTRIBUTION:**

Session	Date	Content	Student Presentations/ Project Steps Due Dates	Assignments
---------	------	---------	---	-------------

1	8/14	.- Syllabus		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read</b> the photocopy handouts on Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement.</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 1.</b> Language, Learning &amp; Teaching</li> <li>- <b>Journal Entry #1:</b> introduce yourself, your interests, your thoughts on education in Costa Rica, etc.</li> </ul>
2	8/21	- <b>Reading Discussion</b> - this is a good-time to ask any questions about what was read or just tell the class of an experience you had which relates to the readings.	* <b>Journal Entry #1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 2.</b> First Language Acquisition</li> <li>- <b>Read Biller - Ch 2.</b> Strategies for Designing Brain-Friendly Classrooms</li> </ul>
3	8/28	<b>No classes due to a visiting prof.</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 10.</b> Theories of Second Language Acquisition</li> <li>- <b>Read Biller - Ch 3.</b> Cerebral Engagement: The Pathways to Memory</li> </ul>
4	9/4	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Each project group should bring a copy of their completed <u>Philosophy</u> draft ( <b>including one for the professor</b> ) for the round table activity.	* Step 1 - Company Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 2.</b> Defining the Context</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 3</b> Age &amp; Acquisition</li> <li>- <b>Read Biller - Ch 4.</b> Abundant Connections</li> </ul>
5	9/11	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 2 <u>Situational Analysis</u>	* Step 2 - Situational Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 3.</b> Articulating Beliefs</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 4.</b> Human Learning</li> <li>- <b>Read Biller - Ch 5.</b> Neural Practice</li> <li>- <b>Journal Entry #2</b></li> </ul>
6	9/18	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 3 <u>Rationale for a Syllabus.</u>	* Step 3 - Rationale for a Syllabus * <b>Journal Entry #2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 4.</b> Conceptualizing Content</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 5.</b> Styles &amp; Strategies</li> </ul>
7	9/25	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 4 <u>Conceptualizing Content.</u>	*Step 4 - Conceptualizing Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 5.</b> Formulating Goals &amp; Objectives</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 6.</b> Personality Factors</li> </ul>
8	10/2	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 5 <u>Defining Goals &amp; Objectives.</u>	* Step 5 - Defining Goals & Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 6.</b> Assessing Needs</li> <li>- <b>Journal Entry #3</b></li> </ul>
9	10/9	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 6 <u>Needs Analysis</u>	*Step 6 - Needs Analysis * <b>Journal Entry #3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Read Graves - Ch 7.</b> Organizing the Course</li> <li>- <b>Read Brown - Ch 7</b> Sociocultural Factors</li> </ul>

10	10/16	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 7 <u>Course Organization.</u>	*Step 7 - Course Organization	- <b>Read Graves - Ch 8.</b> Developing Materials - <b>Read Brown - Ch 8.</b> Cross-Linguistic Influence & Language Learning
11	10/23	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - Class time to work and develop the materials for the final project.		- <b>Read Brown - Ch 9</b> Communicative Competence - <b>Journal Entry #4</b>
12	10/30	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - Class time to work and develop the materials for the final project.	* <b>Journal Entry #4</b>	- <b>Read Graves - Ch 9.</b> Adapting a Textbook
13	11/6	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 8 <u>Materials Development.</u>	*Step 8 - Materials Development	- <b>Read Graves - Ch 10.</b> Designing an Assessment Plan
14	11/13	- <b>Reading Discussion.</b> - <b>Round table peer feedback for final projects</b> - Bring one copy for each group of step 9 <u>Assessments</u>	*Step 9 - Assessments	- <b>Final Journal Entry #5</b>
15	11/20	Project Presentations	* <b>Final Journal Entry</b> *Final Project Due: Written & Oral.	Note: For sessions 15 & 16, final projects will be presented. Attendance for these sessions is mandatory from beginning to end ... no exceptions. Anyone who does not meet this requirement will lose 10 points from the final project grade.
16	11/27	Project Presentations	*Final Project Due: Written & Oral.	
17	12/4	'Ampliacion' Exam		Congratulations in your completion of the first stage of obtaining a Lic. degree.

**NOTE:** Slight changes may occur in the COURSE CONTENTS & DISTRIBUTION. You are responsible to take note of these changes as they occur.

**ASSESSMENT:**

Aspects of Assessment	Percentage
(5) Journals @ 2% each (Individual)	10%
(5) Unannounced Quizzes @ 4% each	20%
(2) Oral Presentations (Groups of two) @ 10% each	20%
Final Curriculum Project (Groups of three to four individuals)	40%
Final Project Presentation	10%

**Description of the course assignments:**

- ☐ **Journal:** As seen in the course contents and distribution, there are five journals of 1 to 2 typed pages in which **you reflect on your learning.** In the journal, you may reflect on the course content, assignments or you may pose and explore questions. Other issues connected to the course are welcome, such as, your

reactions to group discussions, etcetera. Also include either two questions with answers on the reading assignment(s) or a test exercise. Graded on clarity and content. (Individual work)

- ☒ **Oral Presentations:** There are two oral anthology presentations in this course. The first is one chapter from the *Principles of Language Acquisition Anthology* @ 10% (First come...first serve on your choice of chapter, OR it will be assigned for you.) The second presentation consists of one chapter from the Graves Anthology — again @ 10%. Students should take into account the theory read when presenting as well as creating a problem solving activity based on the principles of language acquisition to check the groups understanding of the material. Be creative, and use technology wherever possible. You have approximately 30 to 40 min. of class time for each presentation.
- ☒ **Quizzes:** Pop quizzes will be given throughout the semester. A total of five quizzes will be applied. These short tests consists of two to four questions which will be dictated at any time during the class session. Anyone who is not present without a written excuse will automatically obtain a zero for said quiz. It is recommended that on the occasion a student is unable to attend a class session: (1) the student should inform the professor of the situation prior to the class session and (2) bring a written excuse to class within a week of the absence.
- ☒ **Final Curriculum Project:** Students will complete a multiple-step class curriculum project based on the principles of language acquisition. Each aspect is due in stages. The aim of the project is twofold. On the one hand, it is designed to help you synthesize your knowledge of the theoretical background to language acquisition. On the other hand, it provides a means for you to monitor your understanding of the material via putting it into practice. Projects will be presented to the class at the end of the course period. Each group of three to four students will have an hour to present their work. As always, be creative, and use technology wherever possible. Parts of the final project are adapted from Stoller, F. (1995). Multi-step curriculum/syllabus/materials project. **Note: Any suspected plagiarism will result in the lose of the 50% oral and written project grade.**

**The following are points to take into account when designing your class curriculum project:**

- ☒ Organize content around a meaningful theme – real world problem solving
- ☒ Articulates clear goals, objectives, and assessment of outcomes
- ☒ Encourages student inquiry and problem solving at the highest levels of cognition
- ☒ Incorporate differentiation strategies to meet a variety of learning styles.
- ☒ Includes original work rather than relying entirely on commercial sources
- ☒ Relies on sound subject matter knowledge
- ☒ Reflects mutlicultural practices and themes
- ☒ Integrates technology
- ☒ Assesses student leaning and effectiveness of the unit.

☐ **Background**

You are called by a private company to make a one semester class curriculum proposal including syllabuses (for each group member there should be one syllabus plus two lesson plans for the course being designed) and lesson plans for the semester program. Identify this hypothetical instructional context. Think of other parts of the context and make decisions about the type of curriculum you would design for the hypothetical company.

Below are the stages of the project with clearly stated deadlines for each stage along with the percentages for every step. After they are returned to you, it is believed that you wil respond to the feedback given (by me and/or your peers) in the form of revising each stage so that you can hand in the final version of your project as a well thought out, presentable piece of work.

☐ **Step 1 Company Philosophy –**

To begin this project, first come up with a name for your hypothetical company and get to know its members. What are the beliefs of each member pertaining to people (i.e., students), language leaning/acquisition, and the people in a ‘bilingual’ and multicultural (bicultural) environment. Your company philosophy expresses the beliefs of the faculty concerning education. It lays the groundwork for and gives direction to all that follows. One to two pages in length. See further aspects in the photocopy handout on Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement. (due 4 September)

☐ **Step 2 Situational Analysis –**

Describe the instructional situation you would like to focus on in this project. Identify the characteristics of (a) the learners (their age, number, linguistic level, language needs, etc.), (b) the educational setting including

information about the teachers (qualifications, skills, numbers) and the program (brief history of the program and associated institutions), and (c) the lessons (number of lessons per week, length of individual lessons). In other words, create a setting, give a sight to your project. See further aspects in Graves (2000) Ch 2. (due 11 September)

φ **Step 3 Rationale for a Syllabus --**

Outline the rationale (your beliefs) for the type of syllabus most appropriate to the setting. If you choose to follow a more eclectic syllabus type, indicate the most valuable features that attracted you in making this decision in each approach that you would incorporate in your own syllabus. In other words, provide an overall curriculum description for the situation described in Step 1 by (a) describing the organization of the curriculum and (b) discussing the approach(es) to be followed including your rationale for the steps taken. See Graves (2000) Ch 3. (due 18 September)

φ **Step 4 Conceptualizing Content --**

Create a mind map which illustrates each aspect of your course based on students' needs, resources and constraints of this hypothetical context. Then sort the information into categories to create a flow chart. Give a written explanation to explain your mind map and flow chart. Creativity, as well as content, is a must in this step. See Graves (2000) Ch 4. (due 25 September)

φ **Step 5 Defining Goals and Objectives --**

Considering the information collected so far and the guidelines laid out in Graves Ch 5, identify curriculum goals and instructional objectives for the class curriculum based on the principles of language acquisition. Clearly state the overall goals and objectives of the program/course. See Graves (2000) Ch 5. (due 2 October)

φ **Step 6 Needs Analysis --**

Hypothesize, to the extent possible, learner acquisition needs for the course/class you are designing. Based on the description given in Graves Ch 6, decide on the philosophy you would like to adopt. Then, according to your philosophy, identify the type of information you would like to gather. Giving reasons, decide on the most favorable procedures available in your needs analysis. Finally, create two needs assessment tools that you could use in your class. See Graves (2000) Ch 6. (due 9 October)

φ **Step 7 Course Organization --**

Taking into account the information and tactical plan presented in Graves Ch 7, construct a syllabus for each and every course being taught by the members of your group. Include "focus wheel(s)" found on page 261 of Graves (2000). (due 16 October)

φ **Step 8 Materials Development ---**

There are three aspects to this step. Based on the (new) philosophy of your program/course, you will need to

- analyze a lesson from a course book,
- give reasons in making a decision to adopt a textbook for the program  
(See criteria for Adapting a Textbook in Graves (2000) Ch 9), and
- design materials from scratch for the program

See further aspects in Graves (2000) Ch 8. (due 6 November)

φ **Step 9 Assessments ---**

First, draw up an assessment plan for your course using the guidelines in Graves Ch 10. Second, create a placement test for your instructional setting based on five issues you consider important. And third, design an achievement test based on the program/course described in Steps 1 - 7; list five issues you considered to be essential when devising the achievement test. (due 13 November)

φ **Final Project ---**

Compile the revised versions of steps 1 - 9, as well as a title page, table of contents with page #s, introduction, conclusion, bibliography and an appendix, as your final project. Your complete project consists of (1) a curriculum proposal, (2) a syllabus for each member of the group that pertains to the course stated in the curriculum proposal, and (3) two lesson plans for each syllabus ---- all of which must be based on the principles of language acquisition.

In the bibliography, list sources used/consulted to complete the project in APA format.

(due 20/27 November — depending on your presentation date)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Biller, Lowell W. (2003). **Creating Brain-Friendly Classrooms**. Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Brown, H. Douglas. (2000). **Principles of Language Learning and Teaching - 4<sup>TH</sup> Edition**. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Ellis, Rod. (1994). **Understanding Second Language Acquisition**. U.S.A.: Oxford University Press.

Graves, Kathleen. (2000). **Designing Language Courses**. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Jensen, E. (1998). **Teaching With the Brain in Mind**. U.S.A.: ASCD

Krashen, S. y Terrel, T; (1983). **The Natural Approach**. U.S.A.: Pergamon Press.

Manchur, Carolyn. (1996). **Cognitive Type Theory & Learning Styles**. U.S.A.: ASCD.

Richards, S. y Lockhart, C. (1995). **Reflexing teaching in second language classrooms**. New York; Cambridge University Press.

Shapiro, Lawrence E. (1997). **La inteligencia emocional de los niños**. Argentina: Javier Vergara Editor S.A.