

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

**Spanish 3391G**  
*Second Language Acquisition of Spanish*  
Winter 2010

**Lecture:** Mondays 3:30-4:30 (UC 205)  
Wednesdays 2:30-4:30 (UC 205)

**Instructor:** Ewelina Barski  
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**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00-2:00; by appointment

**Course Aims**

This course aims to provide students with an introduction to Spanish second language acquisition theory and research. The course will consider various issues concerning first and second language acquisition, which affect Spanish second language grammar. Some of the issues to be discussed are the effect of the age at which a second language is learned, input, context of acquisition, bilingualism, heritage language acquisition, language loss, language in the classroom, etc. Students will also gain first-hand experience of second language research by creating and designing their own linguistics test on a topic in Spanish second language acquisition. The course provides students with an introduction to second language acquisition theory with a focus on the Spanish language and training on some methodological tools in the field. Prerequisite(s): Spanish 3300 or 3301E or the former Spanish 201 or permission of the Department. Spanish 3391G aims to do the following:

- To give students an introduction in the current theoretical approaches to second language acquisition research
- To give students an introduction to theories of acquisition of Spanish as a second language, what they should account for and why
- To introduce students to concepts and issues central to Spanish second language acquisition research
- To introduce students to empirical research in L2 acquisition
- To train students to understand the goals of experimental work in second language acquisition

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to have acquired the following:

- Knowledge of some of the current theoretical approaches to second language acquisition
- Knowledge of key issues and concepts in second language acquisition research being able to relate back to Spanish
- Insight into the setting up of empirical experiments in L2 acquisition
- Insight into what a theory of acquisition should account for and why
- Understanding of the goals of experimental research in second language acquisition

### **All readings will be available through WebCT**

- Chin, Ng B. & Wigglesworth, G. (2007). *Bilingualism: An advanced resource book*. New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. p. 40-52; 72-75.
- Gass, S. M. & Mackey, A. (2007). *Data Elicitation for Second and Foreign language Research*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. p. 22-23; 35-36; 71-75; 78; 81; 84-94.
- Guasti, M. T. (2002). *Language Acquisition: The Growth of Grammar*. London: MIT Press. p. 1-21.
- Lightbown, P. M. & N. Spada. (2006). *How languages are learned*. 3rd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 34-35; 41; 53-82; 109-135.
- Montrul, S. (2004). *The Acquisition of Spanish: Morphosyntactic development in monolingual and bilingual L1 acquisition and adult L2 acquisition*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. p. 20-24.
- Montrul, S. (2008). *Incomplete Acquisition in Bilingualism: Re-examining the Age Factor*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. p. 17-22; 64-67; 94-101; 107-111; 131-136; 141-147; 167; 211-216.
- Poplack, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a typology of code-switching. *Linguistics* 18, 581-618.
- Rothman, J. (2009). Understanding the nature and outcomes of early bilingualism: Romance languages as heritage languages. *The International Journal of Bilingualism* 13(2), 1-9.

### **Lecturas para el proyecto final**

- Liceras, J., R. Fernández Fuertes, S. Perales, R. Pérez-Tattam & K. T. Spradlin. (2008). Gender and gender agreement in bilingual native and non-native grammars: A view from child and adult functional-lexical mixings. *Lingua* 188, 827-851.
- McCarthy, C. (2006). What's Missing from Missing Inflection?: Features in L2 Spanish. *McGill Working Papers in Linguistics* 20(2), 21-37.
- Polinsky, M. (2008). Gender under incomplete acquisition: Heritage speakers' knowledge of noun categorization. *Heritage Language Journal* 6(1), 40-71.
- Schriefers, H. & J. D. Jescheniak. (1999). Representation and Processing of Grammatical Gender in Language Production: A Review. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* 28(6), 575-600.
- White, L., E. Valenzuela, M. Kozłowska-MacGregor & Y-K. I. Leung. (2004). Gender and number agreement in nonnative Spanish. *Applied Psycholinguistics* 25, 105-133.

### **Mark Breakdown**

- Participation 5%
- Online discussions 5%
- Problem Set 15%
- Midterm Test 25%
- Final Project 20%
  - Paper 15%
  - Presentation 5%
- Final Exam 30%

*Participation:* Class attendance and participation are an important part of this course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate and discuss the assigned readings in groups and as part of a whole class discussion. Students missing three or more classes will automatically lose their participation mark. Missed assignments, online discussions and exams will not be accepted without a medical note.

*Online Discussions:* Throughout the course (approximately 5 times), the professor will post study questions on the course WebCT site. Students will be required to actively participate in these online discussions, using the bulletin-board-like discussion feature of WebCT. It is expected that every student will participate in discussion with at least one response per topic.

*Problem Set:* For the problem set you will have to carry out an analysis and answer questions about a set of data. It will be assigned late January. The problem set is to be completed at home. You may work with another student, but you must inform the professor of who you are working with and you must hand in separate work.

*Midterm Test:* For the midterm test, unless otherwise noted, you will be responsible for all of the material in the readings and lectures for the units leading up to the midterm. The tests will include mainly the following types of questions: short answer, data analysis and essay questions.

*Final Project:* This project will involve research conducted individually. You will be doing research and setting up one test on a topic related to second language acquisition. The work will include a summary of past research done on the topic and designing your own test or replicating a past study. You must do all the work without actually going through with the testing. No subjects will be tested. The work you submit for this requirement of the course will be in the form of a report. Project instructions will be handed out in early March. Before handing in the report, each student will do a 5 minute presentation showing the test that they have designed.

*Final Exam:* 3 hours. The final exam is cumulative and will, therefore, cover all material covered in the lectures throughout the entire course. The date and time of the final exam will be set by the Office of the Registrar and will take place during the April examination period.

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**Prerequisite:** Spanish 3300 or 3301E or the former Spanish 201 or permission of the Department.

**Antirequisite:** n/a

**Please Note:** You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites (or have special permission from your Dean to waive the prerequisite) and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. If you are not eligible for the course, you may be removed from it at any time, and it will be deleted from your record. In addition, you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's **verbatim** or **paraphrased** text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after cited material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against the possible charge of plagiarism. The University of Western Ontario uses a plagiarism-checking site called Turnitin.com.

**Absenteeism:** Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

*UWO's Policy on Accommodation for Medical*

*Illness* (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>)

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading

