LING 545
Methods and Materials for Second Language Acquisition
Oregon State University, Fall 2006

Contact Information
Instructor: Juan A. Trujillo
Office: 36 Kidder Hall
Phone: 737-3956

Hours: MW 2:00-3:00 or by appointment
E-mail: jtrujillo@orst.edu
Web: http://my.oregonstate.edu

Objectives
Linguistics 545 students will examine historical and contemporary methods and materials for second language teaching from linguistic, political, and ethical perspectives. Students will draw on their new understanding to articulate a personal philosophy of second language education consistent with a commitment to social justice and to develop a personal instructional style that demonstrates both the proficient application of current best practices and the ability to apply new research in second language acquisition throughout their teaching career. This is a four-credit course. We meet together for three hours per week, and each student is required to spend an additional one or two hours per week as an intern in a language classroom. Students must be admitted to the MAT or Double Degree programs and receive instructor permission to enroll.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, Linguistics 545 students must present evidence of their mastery of a number of concepts and skills related to the course objectives. Specifically, you should be able to:

• Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of second language education by constructing an accurate timeline and describing key periods of development in the profession both in writing and orally.
• Indicate your understanding of how to apply prevailing theories of second language acquisition by using them to critique several common classroom approaches to reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar and culture both orally and in writing.
• Prepare unit and lesson plans that promote proficiency and apply principles of critical pedagogy.
• Discuss the role of assessment in the second language classroom and demonstrate theoretically sound methods of assessing reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar and culture.
• Discern the underlying methodology of professionally published instructional materials and specify the pragmatic and theoretical strengths and weaknesses of those materials.
• Illustrate collegiality and the correct application of language acquisition theory to in-house curriculum development by completing a group project involving the use of computers as an aid to language acquisition.
• Show a commitment to continuing professional development by providing evidence of membership in a national organization that publishes a major language journal (e.g. ACTFL, AATSP, etc.).
• Demonstrate competency in understanding and assessing current second language research by writing polished critical reviews of three different articles from peer-reviewed journals.
• Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to ethical behavior by completing the Certification of Education required by OSU to work with human research subjects, becoming familiar with TSPC ethical guidelines, and by adhering to these standards of ethical behavior in all work performed during the term.
• Document your understanding of language classrooms by compiling descriptions and reflections about your time spent as an intern in a public school or university setting.
• Articulate a comprehensive philosophy of second language acquisition in a one-page document and be prepared to defend your profession orally to parents, colleagues, administrators, and politicians.
• Establish your understanding of the politics of language education by identifying historical and contemporary examples of misuse of power in the language classroom by reflecting openly on ways in which your own politics and social position affect your teaching.
Required Materials

Three-ring binder (at least 2" size) for MAT program portfolio
Miscellaneous supplies for projects and portfolio (page protectors, etc.)

Assessment of Student Performance

Formative assessments for the course will take the form of written and/or oral comments from both the instructor and from peers. Because not all assignments are collected for review, students are expected to explicitly seek feedback from faculty or peers when it is desired.

Summative assessment follows a critical pedagogy-inspired model in which grading authority is delegated back to the student, who is expected to make a final assessment of his or her strengths and weaknesses based on the evidence of mastery compiled during the term. At the end of LING 545, you are expected to present a portfolio of work that should display the level of mastery reached in each of the course objectives. Portfolios should also have reflective and interpretive elements that assist the reader in understanding the ways in which you have progressed during the course as well as the areas in which increased effort may be required. They must include a rigorous self-assessment in which you propose a final course grade based on the quantity and quality of your work as well as the amount of effort and personal engagement with the subject matter evident in the portfolio. Ultimate grading authority remains in the hands of the instructor, however, and a final course grade will not be entered until the instructor is confident that a correct decision about the grade has been reached. If required, additional faculty members may be called upon to assist in the process.

In most cases, evidence of your mastery of the course objectives will take the form of essays, reflective writing, critical reviews, summaries, or project reports. (Specific assignments and due dates will be provided). You are encouraged, however, to supplement these papers with other forms of documentation including video or audio files, artwork, etc. Remember that the course objectives include a number of skills that prospective employers would value – consider creating your portfolio with this eventual audience in mind.

Please use the following standard set of criteria for your assessments. These have been adapted from documents created by the Oregon Department of Education:

• **6 Exemplary.** Work at this level is both exceptional and memorable. It is often characterized by distinctive and unusually sophisticated problem-solving approaches and solutions. This is a high A grade.

• **5 Strong.** Work at this level exceeds the standard. It is thorough, complex and consistently portrays exceptional control of content, skills and problem-solving strategies. This is a low A or high B.

• **4 Proficient.** Work at this level meets the standard. It is strong, solid work that has many more strengths than weaknesses. Work at this level demonstrates mastery of content, skills and problem-solving strategies and reflects considerable care and commitment. This is the mid-B to high-C range.

• **3 Developing.** Work at this level shows basic but inconsistent mastery and application of content and skills. It shows some strengths but tends to have more weaknesses overall. This is a mid to low C and is below expectations for graduate work.

• **2 Beginning.** Work at this level is often superficial, fragmented or incomplete. It may show a partial mastery of content and skills, but it needs considerable development before reflecting the proficient level of performance. This is a grade in the D range; way too low for graduate work.

• **1 Exploring.** Work at this level is minimal. It typically portrays a lack of understanding and use of appropriate skills and strategies. Work at this level may contain major errors. Not a passing grade.
Seminar Instructions

This course will implement the open-ended seminar style described by Finkel (2000). The rules of the open-ended seminar are as follows:

1) The purpose of the seminar is to deepen our understanding of *something you have already examined*. Don't come to class without having spent considerable time and effort on all assigned readings and writing tasks.
2) The outcome of the seminar is not predetermined. I may have some hopes about what will come out of the discussion, but surprise discoveries are anticipated.
3) This is not a time for being *told* things by the instructor; the hard work of inquiry belongs to the students, and I will be silent for much of the period.

Written Work

In addition to the informal in-class writing activities we may do on occasion, you will need to complete a number of specific writing tasks to include in your course portfolio. Due dates are on the course calendar. Submission instructions for each writing assignment are the same. New work is always due on Monday. Bring one copy to turn in to the instructor if you want feedback, and a second copy to use for class discussion. In addition, and electronic copy of each assignment must be uploaded to the Blackboard discussion area. By each Wednesday, each of you needs to have selected another student's submission from discussion area and written a thorough response to upload under the original article. There are no restrictions on whose writing you respond to – some essays may get several responses while others get none. At the end of the course, your responses will be returned to you. These are the types of assignments that will be due on Mondays:

1) **Philosophy of second language education.** You are asked to write basic philosophy of education papers in other courses, but this gives you an opportunity to deal specifically with second language education. You will complete a first draft during the first week of class, and a final draft during the last week of class. You may be asked to rewrite this document several times in between. Your first draft must be no longer than five typewritten pages. By the time we're done, this should be the most polished, precise, and meaningful piece of writing in your portfolio.

2) **Certification of Education.** Before beginning any internship activities, completion of the Certification of Education must be completed following the instructions posted on the Regulatory Compliance page of the OSU Research Office web site.

3) **Critical reviews.** You'll complete three polished critical reviews of language research articles taken from one of the major second language teaching journals available in the OSU library or from online sources. Examples include the Modern Language Journal and Hispania. These journals often contain book reviews and other types of articles – make sure you select research-based articles directly related to instructional methods or materials. Your principal task in these reviews is to demonstrate that you can extract the author's hypothesis, understand the research method applied to the problem being discussed, and determine whether the proof presented in the article supports the hypothesis adequately. The Brown book explains what a good research article should contain – we will discuss the first 3 chapters before you're expected to turn in your first review. These critiques probably don't need to be any longer than 2 or 3 pages.

4) **Lesson critiques.** For these assignments, observe a high school or college instructor and keep a detailed log of an entire class period. Analyze the day's activities and write a detailed critique of what you saw. Pay close attention to the formal method(s) used by the instructor and discuss how well the instructor's behavior and activities met the goals of a proficiency-centered language program. Finally, propose a revised lesson plan with different activities that would remedy any deficiencies you found while doing your observation.

5) **Assessment critique.** Select an assignment from an actual class (SPAN 111, for example) and identify its strengths and weaknesses according to the proficiency models presented in Omaggio (2000). Rewrite the assessment, paying close attention to issues of validity and contextualization. Explain your changes.

6) **Textbook critique.** This is a collaborative project. In pairs, examine the strengths and weaknesses of two or three recent editions of language texts used for the language you are preparing to teach. After reaching a
consensus on which text would be the most appropriate, write a summary of the process used in selecting the text and state clearly why the book you chose was the best. We’re doing this in pairs because textbook selection is seldom done by a single person in working language departments.

7) **Technology project.** This is a collaborative project. In groups of three, construct an idea for a multimedia computer application that takes into account the guidelines found in Appendix B of Omaggio. You will be asked to make an oral presentation of your idea and show mock screen shots of your application using transparencies, Power Point, or some similar device. Include a written description of your project and personal reflection in your portfolio.

8) **Unit plan.** Prepare or update a unit plan (one or two week’s worth of material) that demonstrates your understanding of how a proficiency-based classroom operates. Include all the elements you've covered in any ED classes you've taken (e.g. context, knowledge base, etc.) and make certain that your individual activities use only methods and materials that have been demonstrated by research to be effective tools in teaching for proficiency.

9) **Internship report.** At the end of the course, provide a written evaluation from your internship supervisor along with a written reflection on your experience and a self-evaluation of your performance.

**Students with Disabilities**

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with accommodations approved through SSD are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at 737-4098.

**Student Conduct**

Please see the statement located at: [http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm](http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm)
# Course Calendar
(subject to changes; assignments due are italicized)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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| **Week 1** | Intro to course  
Why to teach language, why not to teach it. | What is language?  
Professional ethics in practice and research  
Fillmore & Snow | Join a national organization today!  
Compete Certification of Education |
| **Week 2** | Doing language research  
*Philosophy of language education*  
Brown 1, 2 | Assessing research  
*Journal response*  
Brown 3 | |
| **Week 3** | Defining proficiency  
*Research critique*  
Omaggio 1 | Theories of language acquisition  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 2 | |
| **Week 4** | What methods promote proficiency?  
*Lesson critique*  
Omaggio 3 | Sample lessons (max 10 minutes plus 5 for discussion)  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 5 | |
| **Week 5** | The role of context  
*Research critique*  
Omaggio 4 | Receptive skills  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 6 | |
| **Week 6** | Oral proficiency  
*Lesson critique*  
Omaggio 6 | Oral assessment practice  
(bring recordings of learners)  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 7 | Don't record minors without permission of guardian; don't record anyone without informed consent! |
| **Week 7** | Writing  
*Research critique*  
Omaggio 7 | Cultural understanding  
Racism and discrimination  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 8 | |
| **Week 8** | Assessment  
*Assessment critique*  
Omaggio 9 | Selecting materials  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 10 | |
| **Week 9** | National standards  
*Textbook critique*  
Review  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 11 | |
| **Week 10** | Technology reports  
Technology report | National standards – assessment  
*Journal response*  
Omaggio 12 | |
| **Finals Week** | | *Final Evaluation Interviews* | |