
SUMMER SESSION 1979

Tues. & Fri.
12:30 - 16:20
MPX 8620

Instructor: Debbie Dubrofsky
111 CAE
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This course aims to provide a basic introduction to some topics of relevance for the teacher of English as a second language.

Pronunciation: We will look at the way in which the sounds of the English language are produced by the human vocal apparatus, and proceed to a description of the sound patterns of English pronunciation. Particular attention will be paid to stress patterns and vowel diphthongs, areas of difficulty for almost all of ESL, as well as those consonants and consonant clusters which are particularly difficult for students of oriental background.

Sociocultural factors in language learning: We will attempt to describe the sociocultural factors operative in language learning, within the context of the current situation in British Columbia, and the implications these factors have for teacher strategies within and outside of the ESL classroom. We will discuss the function of, and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of ESL classes for immigrant children in an essentially English speaking school system, as well as indicate some alternatives to formal language instruction.

Second Language acquisition: We will examine some recent case studies of the acquisition of ESL by children, adults and adolescents. The aim here will be to indicate the kind of progress and language development a teacher can expect from learners of different age groups. Because these studies transcribe the students' language at different stages of development rather than simply theorize about it, they are particularly useful in indicating how the teacher can help to hasten the students' progress.

Error Analysis: A survey of current theories which attempt to describe and explain the errors produced in ESL speech, will be provided. Error analysis is a particularly useful tool for aiding the teacher in choosing and presenting pedagogical material.

A survey of current teaching and reference materials: I will provide a bibliography of teaching and reference materials which I have found useful as a teacher of ESL. We will examine some of these books in as much detail as time allows, indicating their strong and weak points and their usefulness in and outside the classroom. Some of these texts are for classroom use, others are to broaden the teacher's own understanding of aspects of English syntax so that he or she will be better prepared to communicate these aspects to ESL students.

Field Work: Through the ESL consultant for the schools of the city of Vancouver, I hope to have a number of current ESL students of different ages, from different language backgrounds and at various levels of acquisition, for us to work with. Students will be given tape recorders and assigned a particular ESL student to work with, at least one hour per week for the duration of the course. Students will use information from the course to analyze their ESL student's speech and experiment with procedures for improving it.

Grades for this course will be given as follows: 40% for two short tests to be administered during course hours; 60% for a paper of from 10 - 15 pages in length, which the students will hand in at the end of the course. The paper will be based on the students' field work, but other topics will be considered upon consultation with the instructor.

All of the topics listed above are of course very broad and each itself could be the subject of a full university course. Their treatment will be necessarily brief, but I will try to adapt the course as much as possible to the stated needs and desires of the students.

Required Texts:

Evelyn Hatch Second Language Acquisition, A Book of Readings, Newbury House, 1978 \$17.10

John W. Oller and Jack C. Richards, Focus on the Learner: Pragmatic Perspectives for the Language Teacher, Newbury House, 1973 \$10.35

J. Donald Brown, Patterns of English Pronunciation, Newbury House, 1975 \$10.75