

SLA Weekly Newsletter  
University of Maryland Second Language Acquisition Program/SLLC  
Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Items in this issue:

1. CNL Lunch Talks: "At the Interface of Computational Learning Theory & Human Language Learning" (2/8)
2. Ph.D. Completion Workshop- "Preparing the Dissertation Proposal: 13 Essential Ingredients (2/9)
3. Workshop on Integrating Advance Technologies into Teaching and Research (2/26)
4. Position Available at CAL: Computer Support and Web Design Specialist
5. 17th International Conference on Pragmatics & Language Learning (PLL)
6. Call for Replica Study Papers- Language Teaching
7. Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) 2007, University of Barcelona
8. Call for Papers- MLA 2007

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1. CNL Lunch Talks: "At the Interface of Computational Learning Theory & Human Language Learning" (2/8)

Date: Thursday Feb 8th 2007  
Time: 12:30 PM  
Location: 3416 Marie Mount Hall

Lisa Pearl  
*Department of Linguistics, University of Maryland*

Abstract:

In this talk, I will explore the mechanism of language acquisition given the boundary conditions provided by linguistic representation and the time course of acquisition. The cases studies presented will use computational modeling. The framework I use conceptualizes a language learning theory as three separate components, assuming that learning is the process of selecting the best-fit option given the available data. These components are (1) a defined hypothesis space, (2) defined data intake, and (3) an algorithm that updates the learner's belief in the available hypotheses, based on data intake. Defining the learning theory in this somewhat abstract manner allows us to apply it to a range of language learning problems and linguistic domains. In addition, we can combine discrete linguistic representations with probabilistic methods. One of the discoveries of this line of work is that acquisition success seems to require that the data intake be a filtered subset of the available input. Moreover, filtering the data intake set can lead to acquisition success even when the learner is faced with a complex, noisy system.

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2. Ph.D. Completion Workshop- "Preparing the Dissertation Proposal: 13 Essential Ingredients (2/9)

Wendy Y. Carter  
Author of TADA: Thesis and Dissertation Accomplished

Date: February 9, 2007  
Time: 4:30pm  
Location: 0200 Skinner Hall

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### 3. Workshop on Integrating Advance Technologies into Teaching and Research (2/26)

Workshop is scheduled for Monday, February 26th, 2007, at 3:45 pm. It should last about 1 hour.

Location: TBA

Did you ever want to be an early adopter? Be the first one to engage your students with the newest technology? Or use advanced computational methods in your research? Join \*Susan Schreibman\*, \*Assistant Dean and Head of Digital Collections and Research\* in a conversation of how the Libraries and ARHU's Academic Technology Group could work with the School of Languages, Literature, and Culture to integrate advanced technologies into your teaching and research.

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### 4. Position Available at CAL: Computer Support and Web Design Specialist

Hours per week: Full time

Position Available: Immediately

Salary: \$48,000 to \$55,000 FTE pa depending upon qualifications

#### DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

Basic Functions: The successful candidate will provide programming and computer management support for test development projects, will determine applications needs of projects, and will develop the software capabilities of program staff.

#### Specific Responsibilities:

- \* Provide technical support, including creating applications, to support project goals and objectives.
- \* Build and maintain Web-interactive databases in SQL Server.
- \* Work with Multimedia editing software, animated PowerPoint, Java, and Macromedia Flash & Dreamweaver to support development of project test and training materials.
- \* Create and coordinate use of MS Office 2007 software applications, including OneNote.
- \* Determine project staff hardware, software, programming, equipment, and technical support needs.
- \* Maintain project document archives.

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

Education:

Bachelors degree in relevant computer or information sciences area or in natural or social science area

Experience:

\* 2-4 years relevant experience or an equivalent combination of technical training and experience

\* 2 years experience with online database application design and maintenance

\* 2 years experience with multimedia based applications

\* Excellent oral and written communications skills in English

Desirable:

\* Proficiency with one or more of the following technologies: SQL Server, Microsoft Office 2007 programs, MS Project, Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, and Macromedia Flash & Dreamweaver, SoundForge, and online learning management systems (e.g., Desire2Learn, Blackboard, WebCT)

\* Experience with Web technologies including HTML, Java, ASP

\* Experience with educational and testing technology

\* Second language

In accordance with INS regulations, all successful applicants will be required to show proof of their legal right to accept employment in the United States.

IF INTERESTED, SEND RESUME AND COVER LETTER TO:

CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

4646 40th Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20016-1859

ATTN: Recruitment 07-03

Or respond by e-mail to: [jobs@cal.org](mailto:jobs@cal.org), Attn: 07-03

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5. 17th International Conference on Pragmatics & Language Learning (PLL)

Imin International Conference Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

March 26-28, 2007

<http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/prodev/pll/>

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AVAILABLE ONLINE!

PRE-REGISTER NOW to enjoy special discount conference rates - DEADLINE FEBRUARY 15, 2007!

The conference will address a broad range of topics in pragmatics, discourse, interaction and sociolinguistics in their relation to second and foreign language learning, education, and use, approached from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives.

Conference highlights include . . .

PLENARY TALKS:

\*Language in action: Conversation analytic perspectives on grammar, interaction, and language learning: Junko Mori (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

\* Reproduction and recursivity in high school ESL: A critical analysis of classroom language-in-use: Steven Talmy (University of British Columbia)

#### INVITED COLLOQUIA:

\* Study abroad experiences from a language socialization perspective (Convener: Haruko Cook, University of Hawaii)

\* Negotiating the self in another language: Discourse approaches to language learning as cross-cultural adaptation (Convener: Christina Higgins, University of Hawaii)

#### INVITED WORKSHOPS:

\* Using questionnaires in research on pragmatics- Kenneth Rose (City University Hong Kong)

\* Teaching and learning L2 pragmatics in computer-mediated environments- Julie Belz (Monterey Institute of International Studies)

Register early to get special rates! The preregistration deadline is February 15, 2007. For more information, visit

<http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/prodev/pll/>

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#### 6. Call for Replica Study Papers- Language Teaching

For the first time in the field, the leading journal Language Teaching (Cambridge University Press) will now devote a section of research papers dedicated exclusively to replication studies. Historically, LT has maintained its role exclusively as a source of information, particularly through its state-of-the-art reviews. However, in line with the new content and format from 2008, publishing such papers will also bring in a new creativity into the journal and a direct and unique contribution to current research agendas, more characteristic of mainstream refereed research journals. In deciding our purview for these papers, I decided to focus on an area of experimental research which receives little or no specific attention in the mainstream journals yet which - it is generally agreed - needs to play a far more significant role than it has up to now in our field. In keeping with the survey characteristics of Language Teaching we also encourage submissions of meta-analyses which attempt to combine or synthesize a series of comparable research replications. The details of this permanent Call for Papers can be obtained from the Editor at: [gporte@gmail.com](mailto:gporte@gmail.com)

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#### 7. Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) 2007

The 29th annual Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) of the International Language testing Association (ILTA) will be held at the University of Barcelona from June 9 to June 11, 2007. The pre-conference workshops will be June 7 and 8, 2007.

You may now register for LTRC 2007 conference on line. Go to:

<http://www.iltaonline.com/Registration/>

To book a conference hotel room, go to:

<http://www.iltaonline.com/Registration/>.

If you have questions, you can e-mail Prime Management at:

ILTA@primemanagement.net.

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## 8. Call for Papers- MLA 2007

The Division of Applied Linguistics of the Modern Language Association is pleased to be able to again sponsor three sessions at this year's MLA Annual Convention in Chicago (Dec 27-30).

### 1) Title of session: Applying Applied Linguistics in Foreign Language Programs

Description:

Papers exploring implementation of applied linguistics research in foreign language departments to support areas such as instruction, teacher development, and curriculum construction. 250-word abstracts by March 15; Hiram Maxim (hhm2@georgetown.edu).

### 2) Title of session: Linking Form and Meaning in the L2 Classroom

Description:

Papers focusing on meaning-based approaches to formal L2 instruction. Practical application of research from varied theoretical perspectives welcome. 250-word abstracts by March 15; Hiram Maxim(hhm2@georgetown.edu).

### 3) Title of session: Corpus-based Applied Linguistics Research

Description:

Papers presenting applied linguistics research that examines either native speaker or learner written or spoken language corpora. 250-word abstracts by March 15; Hiram Maxim (hhm2@georgetown.edu).

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