

SLA Weekly Newsletter
University of Maryland Second Language Acquisition Program/SLLC
Wednesday, March 14, 2007

Items in this issue:

1. TA Development Workshop (3/15)
2. Ph.D. Completion Project Roundtable: "Answering Questions About Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: How to Start, Revise and Finish Your Dissertation" (3/16)
3. SLA Brown Bag Colloquium Series Presents: "Frequencies and Probabilities in Second Language Processing" Dr. Kira Gor (3/28)
4. Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) 2007
5. Call for Papers- Discourses and Cultural Practices Conference
6. Call for papers- The 17th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society (SEALS XVII)

1. TA Development Workshop (3/15)

On Thursday March 15 from 2:30-3:30 in the Multi-purpose room of the Language House, Dr. Gabi Strauch of the German Department will be presenting a workshop on "The View from the Other Side: Campus Resources to Deal with (just about) any Student Issues/Situations."

Prof Strauch has returned to the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and to the German classroom after 10 years in administration including 9 years in the ARHU Dean's Office. Prior to her administrative stint, she worked with teaching assistants in German and in the other languages. Come to the workshop and learn about how to handle the variety of student situations you deal with in the classroom and beyond (ie in office hours, in students' journal entries ...) and where you can turn to on campus for answers and help.

2. Ph.D. Completion Project Roundtable- "Answering Questions About Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: How to Start, Revise and Finish Your Dissertation" (3/16)

conducted by

Marcy Marinelli, Ph.D., Director Learning Assistance Service and Director of the Dissertation Support Group, Counseling Center

Friday, March 16, 2007

4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Skinner Hall, Lecture Hall 0200

Register online at <https://www.training.umd.edu> under the category:

Graduate School Workshops Course: GRAD: Roundtable -- 15 minutes a Day

Questions: 301.405.4183 or at retention@gradschool.umd.edu

3. SLA Brown Bag Colloquium Series Presents: “Frequencies and Probabilities in Second Language Processing” (3/28)

By Kira Gor

School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

University of Maryland

Where: The Language House Multi-purpose Room

Time: 12:15-1:30

ABSTRACT

The role of frequencies and probabilities in linguistic processing is a controversial issue, which is resolved differently depending on the theoretical perspective. Linguistic theory claims that linguistic operations are computational in nature, and symbolic rule application is independent of frequencies. For inflectional morphology, the dual-system approach stemming from this theoretical position maintains that the processing of regularly inflected forms is not affected by frequency (Pinker 1999). Since irregular forms are listed and share the properties of all the lexical items stored in the mental lexicon, access to them depends on the frequency of the form. Thus, in the English past tense, *walk-walked* is generated by rule computation, whereas the *sing-sang* mapping is processed in associative memory, therefore, only *sing-sang* will show the frequency effects. The opposite position, maintained by the single-system approach and grounded in constructivism and connectionism, claims that symbolic rules are not involved in linguistic processing. Instead, both regular and irregular inflected forms (*walk-walked* and *sing-sang*) are processed by associative patterning, with frequencies playing a major role (Bybee 1995). Several positions claim that linguistic processing combines symbolic rules and probabilities in one mechanism (Albright and Hayes 2003, Gor 2003, 2004, Yang 2002). This presentation will adopt the Rules and Probabilities Model (Gor 2003, 2004), which postulates that regular rule application is affected by frequencies and linguistic probabilities both in native (L1) and second language (L2) processing. It will report the results of several experiments on L2 processing of Russian verbal morphology by three groups of L2 learners with varying amounts of instruction and exposure to Russian and compare the L2 data to the child and adult L1 data. Some of these experiments were part of the projects carried out by Vdovina (2005) and Golovetskaya (2005). The implications of these results will be discussed within the polemics between the dual- and single-system approaches. They will also be interpreted as contributing to the ongoing discussion of the role of explicit and implicit input in L2 acquisition.

4. Language Testing Research Colloquium (LTRC) 2007

Theme: Exploring Diverse Methodologies & Conceptualizations in Language Testing Research

University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

June 7 – 11, 2007

LTRC Highlights

- Messick Memorial Lecture: Toward a test theory for the interactionist era (Robert J. Mislevy)

- UCLES/ILTA Lifetime Achievement Speech: Reflections on where we have been and where we should go (Charles W Stansfield)
- Symposium 1: The measurement of language aptitude and high-level L2 abilities (M. Long, C. Doughty & K. Gor),
- Symposium 2: Current perspectives on language assessment for migration and citizenship" (N. Saville, E. Shohamy, S Gysen, K. Dalderop & A.Kunnan)
- Symposium 3: Cognitive diagnosis approaches in language assessment (Y-W. Lee, H-J. Kim, Y. Sawaki, E. Eunhee Jang & A. Kunnan)
- * 29 papers, 16 posters, and 10 works-in-progress Pre-LTRC Workshops
- Language testing: the social dimension" (T. McNamara & C. Roever)
- Using qualitative research methods in test development & validation (L. Taylor)
- Statistical analyses for language assessment (L. Bachman & A. Kunnan)
- A short course on structural equation modeling (B. Byrne & A. Geranpayeh)

For More Information:

On LTRC's program, registration & hotels: <http://www.iltaonline.com/ltrc07/index.htm>

On the International Language Testing Association (ILTA): <http://www.iltaonline.com/>

5. Call for Papers- Discourses and Cultural Practices Conference

29, 30 November & 1 December 2007

www.education.uts.edu.au/research2/conferences/conferences.html

INVITED SPEAKERS

Professor Claire Kramsch University of California, Berkeley;
 Professor Frances Christie, University of Sydney and University of Melbourne; Professor Theo van Leeuwen University of Technology, Sydney; Professor Alastair Pennycook University of Technology, Sydney; Professor Ruth Wodak Lancaster University

INVITED COLLOQUIA

Organizational Communication, Discourse and Intercultural Communication, Discourse and Professional Communication, Discourse and Sexuality, Language Education, Discourse and Identity

CONFERENCE PAPERS SUBMISSION DATES

Friday 29 June 2007 Submission of abstracts for review

Friday 17 August 2007 Notification of acceptance of papers

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The aim of the conference is to explore discourses and cultural practices from a range of perspectives. We are interested in theoretical and applied research on discourses and cultural practices eg discourse and subjectivity, theories of discourse, practices as 'the new discourse'; descriptive studies of discourse and cultural practices in specific contexts eg work, play, popular

culture, organizations, media; and applications to professional and pedagogical contexts. The third day of the conference (Saturday) will have a particular focus on discourse and cultural practices in relation to language and literacy education.

Papers, plenaries and colloquia will address themes and questions such as:

- Discourses in professional practice: What roles do linguistic and cultural practices play in the organization and enactment of work?
- Discourses and identity: How do we and others construct our sense of self through talk and text?
- Academic discourses: Why do the discourses and cultural practices of the academy work as they do?
- Discourse and intercultural communication: How do discourses differ in relation to different cultural practices?
- Gendered discourses: How do discourse, gender and sexuality interrelate?
- Classroom discourses: How do the language practices of the classroom relate to learning and order?

6. Call for papers- The 17th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society (SEALS XVII)

August 31 - September 2, 2007
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, USA
Deadline for abstracts: 31 March 2007

www.geocities.com/sealsxvii/sealsxvii.html

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Abstracts are invited for papers on any topic related to the analysis of Southeast Asian languages. Each abstract should consist of two or three pages as follows:

Page 1

- (1) Paper title
- (2) Sub-field (functional, discourse, sociolinguistics, phonology, formal syntax, semantics, historical, language contact, etc.)
- (3) Name(s) of author(s)
- (4) Affiliation(s) of author(s)
- (5) Email address for each author

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Abstract body (maximum 400 words). Be as specific as possible, with a statement of topic, approach, and conclusions.

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References (if any).

An author may submit one single and one joint abstract. In case of joint authorship, one author should be designated for communication with the organizing committee. Presentations are allotted 20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions. All papers at SEALS are presented in English. Selected papers presented at the meeting will be published in the proceedings.

Abstracts should be submitted as email attachments in two formats, .PDF and .DOC, to Mark Alves, at the following address:

sealsxvii@yahoo.com

Please indicate "Abstract for SEALS XVII" in the email subject heading.

Notification of acceptance by 15 April 2007.
