

## **School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline**

### **LALS 542, Sociocultural theories of language teaching and learning Trimester 3, 2008**

#### **Course Coordinator:**

**Dr Elaine Vine**

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#### **LALS office:**

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#### **LALS 512 Course Administrator:**

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[Rachel.Scholes@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Rachel.Scholes@vuw.ac.nz)

Web contact: [www.blackboard.victoria.ac.nz](http://www.blackboard.victoria.ac.nz)

#### **Class times and locations:**

Class weeks for this course for both on-campus and distance class members are the weeks beginning 17, 24 November, 1, 8, 15 December 2008, and 5, 12, 19, 26 January, 2 February 2009.

Please note that the University closes down from Wednesday 24 December 2008 and re-opens on Monday, 5 January 2009. There will be no university services available during that period, but you will still have access to Blackboard and the library online.

On-campus class meeting time: Wednesdays 1.10-3.00pm in each class week.

On-campus class meeting room: November/December - 24 Kelburn Parade, room 103.  
January/February - New Kirk Building, room 202.

## Course content:

This course explores what sociocultural theories of learning contribute to our understanding of the teaching and learning of language in educational contexts. It examines how spoken and written language are used in teaching and learning, and considers implications for class practice.

Week beginning	Course Week #	Topics	Required reading
17 Nov	1	Overview of the course	Mitchell & Myles, 2004 Lantolf, 2000
24 Nov	2	Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)	Vygotsky, 1978 Poole & Patthey-Chavez, 1994
01 Dec	3	Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)	Lantolf & Aljaafreh, 1995 Nassaji & Swain, 2000
08 Dec	4	Scaffolding	Wood et al., 1976 Antón & DiCamilla, 1999 Wells, 1999
15 Dec	5	Scaffolding	Barnard, 2002 Carmichael-Wong & Vine, 2004 Ohta, 2005
from 24 Dec	University closedown no classes		<b>Assignment 1 due by 5pm, Mon 05 Jan 2009</b>
05 Jan	6	SCT v SLA	Firth & Wagner, 1997 Firth & Wagner, 2007
12 Jan	7	Activity theory	Coughlan & Duff, 1994 Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001
19 Jan	8	Activity theory	Lantolf & Genung, 2002 Thorne, 2005
26 Jan	9	Social identity	Hall, 1995 Peirce, 1995
02 Feb	10	Social identity	Block, 2007 Menard-Warwick, 2007
	no classes		<b>Assignment 2 due by 5pm, Wed 11 Feb 2009</b>

## Objectives:

By the end of this course you should:

1. have an understanding of the nature and scope of sociocultural theories of learning;
2. have explored some contributions of sociocultural theories of learning to our understanding of how spoken and written language are used in teaching and learning;
3. appreciate implications for classroom practice with respect to some first and/or second language contexts for the teaching and learning of language; and
4. be able to examine language teaching/learning materials and practices critically in terms of their assumptions about how learning occurs.

The two assignments address course objectives 1-4, as does the class discussion (see Assessment Requirements below).

## Expected Workload:

Class members are expected to devote on average 12 hours per week to this course in order to maintain satisfactory progress. This includes class contact hours for on-campus class members.

## Readings:

### Required:

There is no set textbook for this course.

The required readings will be in a book of readings from the Victoria University Book Centre, Student Notes shop, Kelburn campus, [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz) and they will also be downloadable from the course Blackboard website.

In preparation for each class week you should read the required readings listed in the course schedule above.

You are expected to participate in a critical discussion of the reading material in class (on-campus class members) or on Blackboard (distance class members). Through your participation in discussion and in activities related to the readings, you will demonstrate your progress towards meeting the course objectives in a broad way, as compared with the in-depth evidence provided by your assignment work.

### Recommended:

As a postgraduate student, you should be extending your reading well beyond the required readings. Some books which take sociocultural theory perspectives are listed in the "Extended Reading" section at the end of this course outline. However, much of your extended reading will arise from your own literature searches, particularly for journal articles, and your selection will be guided by your own needs and interests within the framework of the course.

**Materials and equipment:** None.

### Assessment requirements:

This course will be examined by in-term assessment. There is no final examination. The final grade will be awarded on the basis of your marks for two assignments, and your contribution in class discussion:

	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Required length</b>
Assignment 1	5pm Monday 05 January 2009	40%	1500-2000 words
Assignment 2	5pm Wednesday 11 February 2009	50%	2000-2500 words
Contribution to class discussion		10%	

The required length applies to the 'body' of the assignment (excluding list of references and any appendices). Provide a word count of the assignment 'body' on each assignment. Quotations and in-text references are included in the word count of the assignment 'body'.

Details of the two assignments are provided at the end of this course outline.

You should decide for yourself how best to organise and present your work, taking account of section 6.0 on 'Stylistic conventions' in the School's MA Programme Handbook 2008. The MA Programme Handbook 2008 is available on the School website (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals>) where you will find it under MA (Applied Linguistics, Linguistics, TESOL).

### Penalties:

Please take careful note of the length requirement for each assignment. If an assignment exceeds the word limit, only the first part of the assignment, from the beginning up to the word limit, will be considered for assessment purposes. It is important both academically and professionally that you be able to explain your ideas concisely and coherently.

### **Contribution to class discussion:**

You can earn 10 marks (10% of the course assessment) for contribution to class discussion. You will gain one mark for each course week in which you post on the course Blackboard website at least one timely, relevant and appropriate written response to required readings. Timely means that you post your response on Blackboard before the class meeting for the course week (on-campus class members, from Week 2), or by the end of the course week (distance class members, from Week 1).

### **Mandatory Course Requirements:**

These are the minimum course requirements which must be satisfied in order to earn the right to be assessed for a final grade. You must submit the two assignments. On-campus class members must attend all classes and contribute to class activities and discussions (or meet the distance requirements for any course week in which they miss class due to unavoidable absence). Distance class members must post on Blackboard a written response to required readings, and at least two responses to classmates' postings for each 'course week'. Please note that to meet this requirement, you must have made all the required postings by the end of the course, but not necessarily within the relevant 'course week'. See 'Contribution to class discussion' above for marks to be gained by posting responses in a timely fashion, i.e. week by week.

### **Submitting assignments:**

You can submit your assignments in hard copy either by mail or in person to the School office, or by e-mail attachment to [lals-542@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:lals-542@vuw.ac.nz), in which case each assignment should be a single document in either Word or PDF format. If you submit an assignment in hard copy, just one copy is required. Your assignment will be returned to you with written feedback after the course coordinator has provisionally assessed it. The School will keep a copy of each assignment for use in external and overall assessment of your MA work.

#### General guidelines

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the list of references and any appendices)

#### Cover sheet

A cover sheet is provided on the last page of this outline. For online submission, it is available as a Word file on the course Blackboard website for you to cut and paste into the beginning of your assignment file. For hard copy submission, photocopy and attach it to the front of your assignment. Complete the cover sheet in full. If you are submitting by email, you do not need to sign the cover sheet - submitting from your email address serves the same function.

#### Hard copy submissions

- Type on one side of A4 paper
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves unless necessary
- Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves.

## **Communication of additional information:**

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in class and posted on the course Blackboard website.

## **Academic integrity and plagiarism:**

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## **GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/calendar\\_intro.html](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html)

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Student and Staff Conduct
- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

## **Assignment details:**

### **Assignment 1**

Assignment 1 is due by 5pm on Monday 05 January 2009, but you may hand it in before then if you wish. It counts for 40% of the final grade for the course.

Topic: Discuss the concepts "ZPD" and "scaffolding". Relate them to each other and to your own experience(s) of language teaching and/or learning.

Guidelines:

- Support your discussion with specific examples from your own experience(s). When you are describing and commenting on your own experience(s), use an "I/me/my" style, rather than a traditional impersonal academic style of writing.
- Give your assignment a title which reflects what you see as the point of your discussion.
- Provide a word count of the body of the assignment (excluding your list of references and any appendices).

Criteria for assessment:

- Understanding of theoretical concepts as shown in your discussion.
- Using specific examples appropriately and effectively to support your discussion.
- Evidence that relevant required and extended reading, appropriately referenced, informs your work.
- Organising and presenting your assignment clearly and coherently.

Length: 1500-2000 words (Note the 'Penalties' statement above re assignment length.)

### **Assignment 2**

Assignment 2 is due by 5pm on Wednesday 11 February 2009, but you may hand it in before then if you wish. It counts for 50% of the final grade for the course.

Topic: Discuss the concepts "activity theory" and "social identity". Relate them to each other and to your own experience(s) of language teaching and/or learning.

Guidelines and Criteria for assessment: As for Assignment 1.

Length: 2000-2500 words (Note the 'Penalties' statement above re assignment length.)

## Extended Reading:

The books listed here are by no means the only materials you could read, just some possible starting points. However, much of your extended reading will arise from your own literature searches, particularly for journal articles, and your selection will be guided by your own needs and interests within the framework of the course.

- Forman, E. A. Minick, N., & Stone, C. A. (eds.) 1993. *Contexts for learning: Sociocultural dynamics in children's development*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1978. *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hellermann, J. 2008. *Social actions for classroom language learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Kirshner, D., & Whitson, J. (eds.) 1997. *Situated cognition: Social, semiotic, and psychological perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kramsch, C. (ed.) 2002. *Language acquisition and language socialization: Ecological perspectives*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Lantolf, J. P. (ed.) 2000. *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Appel, G. (eds.) 1994. *Vygotskian approaches to second language research*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Poehner, M. E. (eds.) 2008. *Sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages*. London: Equinox.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. 2006. *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. 1991. *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, C. D., & Smagorinsky, P. (eds.) 2000. *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mercer, N. 2000. *Words and minds: How we use language to think together*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 1998, 5(2). Special issue: Concepts, contexts, and transformation: Scientific and everyday concepts revisited.
- Modern Language Journal*, 1994, 78(4). Special Issue: Sociocultural theory and second language learning.
- Moll, L. C. (ed.) 1990. *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norton, B. 2000. *Identity and language learning: Social processes and educational practice*. New York: Longman.
- Rieber, R. W., & Carton, A. S. (eds.) 1987. *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky. Volume 1: Problems of general psychology*. New York: Plenum Press.

- Rogoff, B. 1990. *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. 1988. *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Toohey, K. 2000. *Learning English at school: Identity, social relations and classroom practice*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Van der Veer, R., & Valsiner, J. 1991. *Understanding Vygotsky: A quest for synthesis*. Oxford, Blackwell.
- Van der Veer, R. 1994. *The Vygotsky reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Vygotsky, L. S. 1962. *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wells, G. 1999. *Dialogic inquiry: Towards a sociocultural practice and theory of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V. 1991. *Voices of the mind: A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Wong, S. 2006. *Dialogic approaches to TESOL: Where the ginkgo tree grows*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.



## COVER SHEET

COURSE NAME & CODE  
e.g. LING 211

SURNAME : \_\_\_\_\_

GIVEN NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

ID NUMBER : \_\_\_\_\_

TUTOR / LECTURER : \_\_\_\_\_

ASSIGNMENT TITLE / NO : \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF WORDS : \_\_\_\_\_

DUE DATE : \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please complete the following checklist:**

**tick box**

I have checked my work carefully before submitting

I have included a list of references, properly formatted

I have numbered the pages of this work

I have retained a copy of this work

There is no plagiarism in this work

I value your feedback and will collect my work promptly

**OR**

I do not require any feedback on this work

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE : \_\_\_\_\_

DATE : \_\_\_\_\_