



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS

LALS 540 EVALUATING RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

15 POINTS

TRIMESTER 1 2014

Important dates

Trimester dates: 3 March to 2 July 2014

Teaching dates: 3 March to 6 June 2014

Easter/Mid-trimester break: 18 April to 4 May 2014

Study week: 9 – 13 June 2014

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Monday 4:10-6:00 pm, 24 Kelburn Parade: Room 101

Names and contact details

Course coordinator and lecturer

Dr Corinne Seals Office: von Zedlitz Building, Room VZ 405
Office hours: Monday 2:00 – 3:00pm & by appointment
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E-mail: corinne.seals@vuw.ac.nz
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Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600
Wellington 6140
NEW ZEALAND

Course administrator

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E-mail: Janet.Attrill@vuw.ac.nz
Post: As above

Communication of additional information

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

Prescription

A survey of published research in Applied Linguistics for the purpose of evaluating the quality of the research and considering its implications for practice.

Course content

Week	Class Date	Topic	Methodology focused reading	Other reading	Assessment Due	
1	3/3	Overview of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods & Characteristics of Good Research	Paltridge & Phakiti Ch. 4 & 8 (Phakiti 2010, Holliday 2010) McDonough & McDonough Ch. 4 (1997)	Litosseliti Ch. 1 (Sunderland 2010)		
2	10/3	Ethnography	Paltridge & Phakiti Ch. 5 (Starfield 2010)	Cameron & Gillen (2013)		
3	17/3	Narratives & Diary studies	Pomerantz (2012)	Stakhnevich (2009)		
4	24/3	Linguistic interviews & Verbal reports	Talmy (2010)	Tembe & Norton (2008)		
5	31/3	Case studies	Mackey & Gass Ch. 6 (Duff 2012)	Kang (2013)		
6	7/4	Survey research	Mackey & Gass Ch. 5 (Dornyei & Csizer 2012)	De Houwer (2007)		
7	14/4	Formal theoretical research	Mackey & Gass Ch. 3 (Ionin 2012)	Tokowicz & MacWhinney (2005)	Task 1	
Mid-trimester break						
8	5/5	Experimental psycholinguistic research	Mackey & Gass Ch. 7 (McDonough & Trofimovich 2012)	Fernández, Igartua, Moral, Palacios, Acosta, & Muñoz (2012)		
9	12/5	Corpora based research	Mackey & Gass Ch. 2 (Granger 2012)	Stapleton (2013)	Task 2	
10	19/5	No class – Work Day for Assignment 1				

11	26/5	Replicating research	Mackey & Gass Ch. 15 (Abduhl 2012)	Bigelow, Delmas, Hansen, & Tarone (2006)	
12	2/6	No class – Queen’s Birthday			Assignment 1
Study Period and Exams					

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Understand the nature and scope of research in applied linguistics.
2. Discuss the relevance of research in your own professional situation.
3. Be knowledgeable about research issues, particularly concerning the criteria for good quality research.
4. Evaluate published research studies, by considering the strengths and weaknesses of the design and the wider applicability of the findings.

Teaching format

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On campus classes are run as lectures plus workshops. For distance students, the course is available at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>. Blackboard is Victoria’s online teaching and learning system. In both modes, students are expected to participate regularly and thoughtfully in activities and discussions. Further information about Blackboard is available under Frequently Asked Questions, under the Study tab of the School website.

For distance students, the course is available at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>. When you enrol you will automatically be given a computer user account, which will be on your *Confirmation of Study* form. Usually, it is the first six letters of your family name and four letters of your first name. So if your name is Robert Cameron, your user name might be *camerorobe*. Your password will be your student ID number. You need to use this computer user account when you access journals from off-campus. For help, contact scs-help@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5050. If you want to use other student computing services, you need to call the SCS Help Desk on (04) 463 5050. Staff will re-confirm your username and re-set your password after confirming your identity. A useful website is www.victoria.ac.nz/its/student-services. If you are an international student the following site could be useful for you: www.victoria-international.ac.nz.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. attend all lectures unless otherwise excused (on-campus students) or participate online (distance students)
2. prepare the required article responses ahead of time and bring them to class or upload them to the website (distance) on blackboard by the start time of each lecture
3. complete the required task and assignment
4. prepare and deliver the required article response in-class presentation (distance students will upload presentations to blackboard on assigned days)

Workload

It is anticipated that you will need to devote approximately 15 hours per week to this course over all 10 weeks, for a total of 150 hours (including readings, class attendance or discussion board postings, outside readings, working on assignments, etc.). Please remember that this is considered a minimum time requirement. You may find that you require more, and you should budget time accordingly. The table below has a general idea of how you should be spending your time for this course:

Weekly tasks	Suggested hours
Attendance at lectures	Two hours per week
Discussion board postings, and preparation for assignments, presentations, article responses, and tasks	Three hours per week over the course of the trimester
Assigned class readings	Ten hours per week

Assessment

Your achievement of the course objectives will be assessed by means of a minimum of six weekly article responses, one assignment, one article presentation, and your choice of one of two tasks:

- Six article responses (200 words) chosen from any six classes, due weekly by the start of the corresponding class and worth 2.5% *each* (a total of 15%)
- Task 1(1000-1500 words), due Monday 14 April **OR** Task 2 (1000-1500 words), due Monday 12 May, and your chosen task is worth 35%
- Assignment 1 (1800-2000 words), due Monday 2 June by 11:59pm via email, and worth 40%
- Article presentation (10-15 minutes), due at the beginning of assigned class, and worth 10%

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Six article responses (200 words) chosen from any six classes, due weekly by the start of the corresponding class	15%	1, 2, 4	Varies
2	Task 1(1000-1500 words) OR Task 2 (1000-1500 words)	35%	1, 2, 3, 4	14/4 (task 1) OR 12/5 (task 2)
3	Assignment 1 (1800-2000 words)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4	2/6
4	Article presentation (10-15 minutes)	10%	1, 2, 3, 4	TBD in class

Article Responses

The article responses require preparation through reading before class, and attendance at lectures (for on-campus students) or timely participation on blackboard (for distance students). The article responses should involve critiquing the research studies we read each week listed under “other readings”. You will need to write a short (200 word) critique. You need to bring these responses with you to class each week, for a minimum of six weeks. You may choose the weeks that you submit article responses, but the chosen responses must be turned in on the day that corresponds

to each reading in the course outline. I will not accept late responses. Note: all students must read all required readings, whether or not you have chosen to write a response that week. Your attention to the readings and your responses will form part of our class discussions. The focus of the responses should be the design of the research (how it was carried out) rather than the findings of the research. The article responses meet the first, second, and fourth learning objectives.

Distance students will also submit article responses, but will do so online. Your responses will be submitted on Blackboard in the discussion board by the start time of the corresponding classes.

By the day of each lecture (Mondays weekly) you will be required to read the assigned readings and write a response. All students are required to read all assigned readings, but you need only submit responses during six weeks of your choosing. These responses should be similar to those of the on-campus students, described above. You should read the responses by other students and comment on them in separate entries or by using the comments option.

Task 1: Reviewing topic-specific methods

Choose a topic in applied linguistics research (e.g. ethnography, case studies, corpora research, etc.), and write a literature review that includes descriptions and evaluations of between 5 and 15 studies. The majority of studies that you include should have been published within the last 10 years to decrease the likelihood that the results are out of date. Keeping in mind what makes good research in applied linguistics, describe the method(s) used in each study and the results obtained. Also be sure to include such relevant details as the participants (if relevant), research location(s), language(s) involved in each study, etc. Evaluate the studies, and decide if each study is methodologically sound or not. If the methods of studies should be improved upon, tell how. Feel free to compare and contrast the studies against each other if it helps further support your argument for what makes good research in applied linguistics. Task 1 meets the first, third, and fourth course objectives.

Task 2: Research methods in the workplace

Consider the research methods learned in class thus far and decide which method(s) would be most useful in your given profession. Describe a particular scenario that might occur in your profession, and describe how one or more of these methods could be applied. You should use the core text, as well as additional outside literature to support your choice. Remember to focus on methodology, and be sure to consider the following questions when completing this task. Task 2 relates to all four learning objectives.

1. What method(s) would be most useful and why?
2. What would you have to pay particular attention to when utilizing the chosen method(s)?
3. What have you learned from the readings thus far about how to conduct good research using the chosen method(s), and how would you apply this to your own scenario?
4. Are there any downsides to using the chosen method(s) in your scenario?

Assignment 1: Contrasting two research articles

Compare the two research studies by Malone (2013) and by Pham & Hamid (2013), which are available on Blackboard. After providing a suitable introduction, write an in-depth evaluation of the two studies. Identify the key features of the research design in each case and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the two pieces of research, paying particular attention to the validity of the results. You should also consider the appropriateness of the research

methods/measurements for investigating the issues at hand, and other methods of research that may have been equally/more valid. You must explicitly compare/contrast the two studies, either as an integral part of the main discussion or in a separate section towards the end of the assignment. Assignment 1 relates to all four learning objectives.

You may also wish to comment on how well the articles are written and whether any significant information is not given; however, the main focus should be on the quality of the research being reported. While this is partly a comparison, and will involve some summary, it is important to remember that this assignment is mainly an evaluation, and should be centred on an informed critique.

Article Presentation

During the first week of class, a sign-up sheet will be passed around, during which point you will choose a topic on which you will find a published academic article to give a brief in-class presentation (10 to 15 minutes in length). An online sign-up sheet will be posted to blackboard for distance learning students. The topic that you choose will correspond to a particular class day, and your presentation will be given that day at the beginning of class. You may choose to give a media presentation (e.g. Powerpoint), use handouts, or present speech style. Distance learning students must either create a written handout or a media presentation and upload it to blackboard on the day you are assigned. The article chosen must not be one already assigned for class, and should be found from an appropriate disciplinary publication (e.g. Journal of Applied Linguistics, TESOL, Academic Exchange Quarterly, etc.). A list of sample sources will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

Your presentation should include the name of the chosen article and its citation information. You should then summarize the article, focusing largely on the methods used by the author(s) in conducting the study. You should also include a brief evaluation of the study's methodology, as well as any possible suggestions for methodological improvement you may have, though this is not required if you feel that the study was methodologically sound (in which case, you should state this clearly). You should also include a discussion question at the end of your presentation, which will be incorporated into the larger class discussion. Please feel free to relate the article to your own professional background, if relevant. All on-campus students and distance learning students must also upload their presentation to Blackboard on your assigned presentation day. The article presentation relates to all four learning objectives.

Submission and return of work

For the article summaries and chosen task, on-campus students must submit a hardcopy to the School office and/or submit electronically through Blackboard. Distance students must submit through Blackboard. All submissions must be made before the beginning of class on the day assigned. Every effort will be made to return work during the following week's class.

For the article presentations, each on-campus student must bring your presentation to give at the beginning of class on the day assigned. Distance learning students and on-campus students must also upload the presentations to Blackboard on your assigned day. Each student will receive written feedback within 72 hours of delivering your presentation.

For Assignment 1, on-campus students and distance learning students must submit an electronic copy via email to corinne.seals@vuw.ac.nz. This must be submitted electronically by 11:59pm (New Zealand time) on 2 June, but you are also welcome to submit before that time. All

submissions must be made in PDF or Word format (.doc or .docx). I will confirm receipt of your assignments within 24 hours of receiving them.

All assignments will automatically be submitted to Turnitin to check for plagiarism.

General guidelines

When submitting typed or word-processed assignments:

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section or title page)
- Follow APA citation guidelines.

Hard copy submissions

- Put a LALS cover-sheet (attached) on the assignment, and complete the requested information
- 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

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. If you find that you need an extension, you **must** get explicit permission from the course coordinator before the due date. Extensions will only be granted when the assignment is not completed due to unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or family emergencies.

Penalties

For assignments handed in late without an extension, the maximum grade possible is B+, and no personal comment will be provided

Be careful to keep within the word limits. Assignments that are slightly excessive or short in length (more than 10% over or under the limit) will be marked down one grade ie. from a B+ to a B, or from a B to a B-. Assignments that are far over or under the word limit (more than 25% over or under the limit) will be marked down one full grade ie. from B+ to C+, or A- to B-.

Plagiarism will result in automatic failure in the course. See also Academic Integrity and Plagiarism below, and page 17 of the MA Handbook.

Set texts

Mackey, A. & Gass, S.M. (2012). *Research Methods in Second Language Acquisition: A Practical Guide*. Wiley Blackwell.

Additionally, a set of required readings is available as downloadable files from the LALS 540 Blackboard site.

Postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from vicbooks' new store, Ground Floor, Easterfield Building, Kelburn Parade.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz

Recommended reading

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S.M. (2005). *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

McDonough & McDonough (1997). *Research Methods for English Language Teachers*. Arnold.

Paltridge, B. & Phakiti, A. (2010). *Continuum Companion to Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Continuum.

Ross, S.J., Richards, K.J. & Seedhouse, P. (2011). *Research Methods for Applied Language Studies*. Routledge.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates

- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

The school may include additional websites if appropriate, for example links to qualification-specific or discipline-specific style guides and graduate attributes.

Victoria University of Wellington
School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies

COVER SHEET

COURSE NAME & CODE
e.g. LING 211

SURNAME : _____

GIVE NAME : _____

ID NUMBER : _____

TUTOR / LECTURER : _____

ASSIGNMENT TITLE : _____

NUMBER OF WORDS : _____

DUE DATE : _____

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 : _____