

Department of Linguistics
University of Calgary
Term/Year: Winter 2011

LING 331: FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Days and Time: MWF 13:00-13:50

Room: SB 105

Instructor: Dr. Carlos de Cuba

Office: SS 832

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E-mail: cfdecuba@calgary.ca

Office Hours: Wed. 4-5pm, and by appointment

T.A.: Silke Weber

Office: SS 817

Telephone: 403-220-2065

E-mail: ksuweber@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: TBA

REQUIRED TEXT

Hoff, Erika. (2005). *Language Development* (4th edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Journal articles and/or chapters will be uploaded on Blackboard.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The study of language development/acquisition is central to our understanding of human behavior because it engages issues of brain organization and processes, symbolic capacity, knowledge representation, socialization, communication, and culture. Moreover, study of the origins and course of normal language development raises important theoretical issues in both psychology and linguistics (e.g., innateness of grammar, bilingualism, language and thought). Because language defines us as human and the study of language is connected to so many areas of psychology and linguistics, it is an important and very active area of scholarship. This course surveys the normal course of language development, variations in language development in young children, and competing theoretical accounts of how development occurs.

Becoming familiar with (learning how to read, understand, and synthesize) original research papers is a primary aim of the course that you'll work toward by writing a series of reaction papers, and a final research paper. Writing is a powerful way to learn because it enables you to test your understanding of research material and to organize your thinking.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A) We'll cover each area of study by reading the Hoff text as well as assigned chapters and research papers and having class discussions in order to understand psychological and linguistic perspectives on language development. As an active member of the class, you'll of course read and consider the assigned material before our class meetings.

B) For some of the assigned readings (seven of them), you'll write 1-2 page (typed & double-spaced) reaction papers and bring them to class on the day of the discussion of those readings. These are marked with an asterisk on the preliminary course schedule below.

C) You'll be responsible for presenting your reaction to one of the additional readings as a part of

class discussion - and each person will individually lead a group discussion. I will randomly assign these presentations (each student will do one).

D) There will be two in-class midterm exams (no final exam) covering the material presented in class and reading assignments. The format will be multiple choice and/or short answer.

E) You will write a research paper on a topic of your choice. The topics will be related to the material covered during the semester. The paper will be graded for presentation of a coherent thesis, evidence to support the thesis, pertinent details of studies, integration of research results where possible (i.e., do not just present research paper summaries one after the other), and a conclusion. You may of course also use what you've learned in class and from the text to formulate your ideas. A paper proposal will be due a few weeks before the paper is due.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

The lectures will be organized around the topics discussed in the readings, and I may at times depart from the readings, omitting, expanding upon, or taking issue with certain material. Regular attendance is therefore very important, as is class discussion. While I will not be taking attendance, in my experience poor attendance almost always results in poor grades. Also note that there is a participation component to your grade. **You are responsible for any material you miss if you miss class, so please do not ask me or the T.A. to recreate lessons you have missed during office hours.**

LATE ASSIGNMENTS, MISSED EXAMS

Late assignments will not be accepted for credit, and no make-up exams will be given without a valid, well-documented excuse (i.e. illness (with a doctor's note), family emergency, etc.).

EVALUATION

Reading responses (7)	30%
Class participation/discussion leader	10%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Final paper proposal	5%
Final paper	25%

GRADING SCHEDULE

A+ = 97-100 %	B+ = 85-88%	C+ = 74-77%	D+ = 62-66%
A = 92-96 %	B = 81-84%	C = 70-73%	D = 58-61%
A- = 89-91 %	B- = 78-80%	C- = 67-69%	F = 0-57%

BLACKBOARD

We will be using the Blackboard facility in this class. Announcements, homework, and other important information will be posted on the class site. Be sure to check it regularly. You can access class information on-line at: <https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca>. Some announcements may be distributed via email. Make sure that your correct address is listed on Blackboard, and be sure to check your email regularly.

Preliminary schedule of readings and assignments (subject to probable revision)

Date	Topic	Text reading (Hoff)	Chapter, article	Due dates
Monday 1/10	Introduction—What is language?			
Wednesday 1/12	What does a child need to know?	3-27	MacWhinney (2001)	
Friday 1/14	Generative approaches		*Pinker (1994), Chapters 1, 2	
Monday 1/17	Usage-based approaches		*Tomasello (2003), Chapter 2	Reaction #1 (Pinker vs. Tomasello)
Wednesday 1/19	Brain and language	45-61 69-71	Hickock et al. (2001)	
Friday 1/21	Pidgins and Creoles, Critical period	39-45 61-69		
Monday 1/24	Animal communication	72-86	*Pepperberg (2007)	Reaction #2 (Pepperberg)
Wednesday 1/26	Communicative development	89-116		
Friday 1/28	Narrative, social context	117-131		
Monday 1/31	Phonetics/Phonology	135-142 162-176	*Singleton & Newport (2004)	Reaction #3 (Singleton & Newport)
Wednesday 2/2	Phonological Development	142-148		
Friday 2/4	Phonological Development			
Monday 2/7	Speech perception	148-162		
Wednesday 2/9	Review Class			
Friday 2/11	EXAM 1			EXAM 1
Monday 2/14	Morphology			
Wednesday 2/16	Lexical Development	185-218		
Friday 2/18	Lexical Development		*Pinker (1994), Chapter 5	Reaction #4 (Pinker)
2/20—2/27 Reading week (no classes)	READING WEEK: NO CLASSES			
Monday 2/28	Lexical Development			

Wednesday 3/2	Syntax	222-228		
Friday 3/4	Syntactic Development	228-241		
Monday 3/7	Syntactic Development	241-250	* Boeckx (2010) chapters	Reaction #5 (Boeckx)
Wednesday 3/9	Syntactic Development	250-266		
Friday 3/11	Language & Cognition	276-290		
Monday 3/14	Bilingualism	290-293 272-276	*Bialystock & Shapero (2005)	Reaction #6 (Bialystock & Shapero)
Wednesday 3/16	Regional dialects	298-310 314-319		
Friday 3/18	Social dialects			
Monday 3/21	Review Class			
Wednesday 3/23	EXAM 2			EXAM 2
Friday 3/25	Sign Language	374-384		
Monday 3/28	Sign Language			Paper proposal due
Wednesday 3/30	Resilient properties of language		*Goldin-Meadow (2003), ch. 10-12	Reaction #7 (Goldin- Meadow)
Friday 4/1	Autism	393-397	Rodier (2000)	
Monday 4/4	Williams syndrome, SLI	385-393 397-406		
Wednesday 4/6	Topics TBD	Readings TBD		
Friday 4/8	Topics TBD	Readings TBD		
Monday 4/11	Topics TBD	Readings TBD		
Wednesday 4/13	Topics TBD	Readings TBD		
Friday 4/15	Wrap up—what the course was about		Pinker (1994) Chapter 9	
4/21	Final paper due			Final Paper Due

GENERAL COURSE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

LINGUISTICS STUDENT ADVISING

For any questions regarding the linguistics major or minor, the organization of your program, or the selection of courses, you can see the linguistics **under/graduate advisor/program director**:

Dr. Robert Murray	SS 824	403-220-8109	ling.undergrad@ucalgary.ca
Dr. Steve Winters	SS 814	403-220-7230	ling.undergrad@ucalgary.ca
Dr. Suzanne Curtin	SS 842	403-220-3927	linggrad@ucalgary.ca

FACULTY of ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING and STUDENT INFORMATION

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit us at the 4th Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit us in the MacKimmie Library Block.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY ACT (FOIP)

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was enacted by the Alberta Legislature on June 1, 1994. The Act is intended first of all to allow any person the right of access to the records in the custody and under the control of a public body although this right is subject to limited and specific exceptions. The Act also includes a strong right to privacy component, allowing individuals to control the manner in which a public body collects personal information, to control the use that a public body may make of the information, and to control the disclosure of that information by a public body. It also allows individuals the right of access to personal information about themselves held by a public body and the right to request corrections to that information.

For more information on FOIP, please visit: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>
Or contact Jo-Anne Munn Gafuik at (403) 220-3602 or by email: munnngafu@ucalgary.ca

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

1. the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
2. parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
3. the whole work (e.g. an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
4. a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Students are encouraged to work together in preparing homework assignments. However, unless noted otherwise in writing, students must write up their own answers for submission of the assignment. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. Possible penalties for plagiarism include; failing the assignment, failing the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of plagiarism is also guilty of academic misconduct.

For more information on academic misconduct and related UofC regulations please consult the Student Misconduct web pages in the on-line University Calendar. These can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

EMERGENCY EVACUATION / ASSEMBLY POINTS

The University of Calgary is committed to creating a safe and healthy living and learning environment. The health and safety of our employees, students and the general public are the highest priority of the University of Calgary's Emergency Management Program. During times of emergency, Assembly Points have been identified across campus. These areas have been selected as they are large enough to hold a significant number of people and will provide an evacuated population access to washroom facilities and protection from the elements. Assembly points are also designed to establish a location for information updates:

- from the emergency responders to the evacuees; and
- from the evacuated population to the emergency responders.

Please familiarize yourself with the Emergency Assembly Points listed here:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

And the Emergency Instructions listed here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/28>

SAFE WALK INFORMATION

Twenty four hours a day and seven days a week Safewalk volunteers walk people safely to their destination on campus. This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors.

Requesting Safewalk volunteers to walk with you is easy!

- Call 403-220-5333 (24 hours a day/seven days a week, 365 days a year)
- Use the Help Phones (they are not just for emergencies)
- Approach an on-duty Safewalker and request a walk

For more information call the Safewalk office at 403-220-4750 or email safewalk@ucalgary.ca.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION

The Students' Union in partnership with the University of Calgary and the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) offers students a key advocacy resource to assist in addressing concerns and issues they encounter at the university with the Office of the Student Ombuds.

Students in undergraduate programs, please contact the Student's Union:

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/home/contact.html>

Students in graduate programs, please contact the GSA: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>

Student Ombudsman: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>