

Linguistics 203

Language Acquisition and Development

Course Syllabus

Fall 2011

Misha Becker
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Course time: TR 2:00–3:15 p.m.
Prereq.: Ling 101

Office: Smith Building 301
Office hours: Fridays 9–11 a.m.
Course location: Wilson 217

- **TEXTBOOK:** *First Language Acquisition: The Essential Readings* edited by Barbara C. Lust and Claire Foley (Blackwell Publishing, 2004)
- **GRADING:**

Attendance/Participation	10%	
Assignments	10%	
In-class Tests	60%	(20% each)
Final Project	20%	
- **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussions. Students who have missed class for any reason are responsible for finding out what information has been missed and are encouraged to talk to the instructor. Missed tests may be made up only in cases of emergency (family or medical; please provide a note from a doctor). If you know in advance that you'll have to miss a test please let me know as early as possible, and no later than the time of the test itself. **Barring emergencies or advance notice, tests will not be made up.**

Assignments

This course is lecture- and reading-oriented, so there will be few non-reading assignments. In order to encourage and help with the readings, you will answer some study questions for each reading. Answers to study questions are due on the date the reading is assigned for (see syllabus below). Reading assignments will be graded as 1 (completed), 0 (not completed) or .5 (partially completed). Answers **MUST** be stated **IN YOUR OWN WORDS**. Homework is due at the beginning of lecture and will not be accepted late (except for illness). Non-reading assignments will be announced in class.

Course Project

In lieu of a final exam, you will complete a project on some aspect of language acquisition. For this project you will have the option of using the CHILDES database to analyze child language data already collected and transcribed, using sound files recorded by me, or collecting your own data from a child. You should choose

a topic that goes into some depth but can be reasonably completed within the semester. Collect/analyze your child data and write a paper about it.

You will work in pairs on this project. Please be advised, however, that BOTH partners will receive the SAME grade, so if you are concerned about unequal effort, you should see me as soon as possible. I reserve the right to assign different grades if there is evidence of strongly unequal effort. No topic or partner changes after the topic deadline, so please choose carefully!

Syllabus

Date	Topic	Reading
8/23	Introduction and Course Overview	Chapter 1 (pp.15–19)
8/25	Theories of Language Acquisition: Piaget and Chomsky	Chapter 4 (pp.64–66, 69–70, 72–75)
8/30	Early Phonetic Abilities and Speech Perception	Chapter 20
9/1	Phonology 1	Chapter 21 (pp.285–289)
9/6–8	Phonology 2–3	Chapter 22 (pp.294–300) (Ph3)
9/13	Phonology 4	
9/15	Empirical Methodologies	
9/20	TEST 1	
9/22	Calculating MLU, Frequencies	Chapter 25
9/27	CHILDES Database—BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS	
9/29	Morphology	Chapter 19, Chapter 18 (pp.253–263)
10/4–6	Syntax 1–2	Chapter 26 (T), Chapter 14 (Th)
10/11–13	Syntax 3–4	
10/18	TEST 2	
10/20	NO CLASS—FALL BREAK	
10/25	Lexical Acquisition 1	Chapter 29
10/27	Lexical Acquisition 2	Chapter 13 (pp.208–211 and 218–221) (Th)
11/1	Theory of Mind	
11/3	Critical Period; PROJECT TOPICS DUE 11/3	Chapter 9
11/8	Acquisition in Deaf Children	
11/10	Acquisition in Blind Children	Chapter 13 (pp.212–218)
11/15	Language Disorders	
11/17	TEST 3	
11/22	Bilingualism 1	
11/24	NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING	
11/29	Bilingualism 2	
12/1–6	Project Presentations	
12/8	PROJECTS DUE BY 4 p.m.	

Honor Code

Please remember the Honor Code. All work that you turn in is to be your original work. You may not turn in another person's work as yours, and quoted material must be properly cited. You may not receive assistance during test taking from another person, nor from any information or materials unless authorized by the instructor.