

Linguistics 529
Language Acquisition II:
Acquisition of Syntax

Fall 2009

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Office: Smith Building 301
Office hours: Wed. 10–12
Course time: TR 2–3:15 p.m.
Course location: Dey 304

Course Description

The aim of this course is to explore in some depth the main areas of syntactic theory within the context of first language acquisition. Topics will include clause structure and finiteness, A and A' movement, control, null elements, binding, and tense/aspect. Time permitting we may also cover some aspects of creolization.

A course in syntax (Ling 201 or 530) is required. Ling 203/528 is recommended.

Course Requirements

Students will each present two (primary-source) readings in class, and turn in a squib on an additional primary-source reading. This work (along with general class participation) will count for 40% of your grade. The remaining 60% will be your term paper.

Your term paper will present original research, using empirical L1 data (from a child or using CHILDES) to explore a theoretical issue. A draft of the paper will be due by **November 19th**, and we will “workshop” the papers in the following class meeting. The final paper will be due at the end of the semester.

Text

Guasti, Maria Teresa (2002) *Language Acquisition: The Growth of Grammar*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Additional readings on reserve or available on-line.

Topics and Readings

N.B. Readings in italics are possible squib articles.

week	topic	readings
1	Introduction	Guasti ch.1, Lightfoot (1982, ch.2) <i>The Central Problem</i> , Hyams (1988), (Gleitman and Newport (1995): optional)
2	Argument Structure and Verb Learning	Guasti ch.3 (sec. 3.3 to end), Kirby (2009, ch.2) Gleitman (1990); Lidz et al. (2003) <i>Naigles (1996)</i> ; <i>Gertner et al. (2006)</i>
3–4	Clause Structure and Root Infinitives	Guasti ch.4, Radford (1988); Poeppel and Wexler (1993); Rizzi (1994); Wexler (1998); Hoekstra et al. (1999) <i>Pratt and Grinstead (2007)</i>
5–6	Tense & Aspect	Weist et al. (1984); Wagner (2001); Becker (2002); Hyams (2007); Green and Roeper (2007) <i>Legate and Yang (2007)</i>
7–8	Null Arguments	Guasti ch.5, Hyams (1987); Valian (1991); Gerken (1991); Hyams and Wexler (1993); Rizzi (1999); Hyams and Schaeffer (2007)
9–10	A-movement (passive, raising)	Guasti ch.7, Kirby (2009, ch.3) Maratsos et al. (1985); Borer and Wexler (1987); Fox and Grodzinsky (1998); Babyonyshev et al. (2001); Hirsch and Wexler (2007); Becker (2006, in press) <i>Hyams et al. (2006)</i> ; <i>Crain et al. (1987)</i>
11	Control	Guasti ch.10, Chomsky (1969); McDaniel et al. (1991), Kirby (2009, chs. 5 & 7)
12	A' -movement (wh-mvt and relative clauses)	Guasti ch.6, Stromswold (1995); de Villiers et al. (1990); Thornton (2004)
13–14	Binding Theory	Guasti ch.8, Chien and Wexler (1990); Grodzinsky and Reinhart (1993); Wexler and Manzini (1987); Elbourne (2005)
15	Quantification	Guasti ch.9, Crain et al. (1996); Musolino and Lidz (2003, 2006); Gualmini (2007)
	Creolization	Kegl et al. (1999); Kam and Newport (2005); Singleton and Newport (2004)

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