SPH 441/541
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Meeting Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:45
Room: Chemistry Building, Room 134
Instructor: Mary Alt, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Teaching Assistants: Katrina Jensen: katrinaajensen@email.arizona.edu
                               Katelyn Meves: kmeves@email.arizona.edu
Preceptors:  Ashley Chavez: ashleyc3@email.arizona.edu
                       Darci McInnes: dmcinnes@email.arizona.edu
                         Sheryl Riech: sriech@email.arizona.edu
                           Lisa Wilson: lwilson0@email.arizona.edu

NOTE: When contacting the instructor and the TA/Preceptors, please use UA Catmail (not d2l)
and please put SpH 441 in the subject heading.

Instructor Office Hour: Tuesdays at 11:30, SpH Room 318, and by appointment
Contact Information: malt@email.arizona.edu, 626-6180


Website: Access via Desire 2 Learn http://d2l.arizona.edu
*Click on the NetID Sign In (same information you use to get into your UA Email)
*From the “My Home Screen” choose this course
REGULAR check-in on website required: Most class materials and announcements will be posted on the website.

Course Description: Principles and processes of first language acquisition will be described in relation to children's social, cognitive, and motor development. This course will briefly compare and contrast first language acquisition processes to child and adult second language acquisition. Although not the focus of the course, warning signs of language disorders will also be highlighted.
Course Objectives: By the end of this class, students should be able to:

- Compare and contrast differing theoretical models of language acquisition and the evidence associated with them.
- Describe the normal developmental sequence of first language acquisition in terms of phonology, morphology, pragmatics, semantics and syntax.
- Be able to recognize prelinguistic communication behaviors and the technical terms used to describe those behaviors.
- Be aware of the roles adults play in language acquisition.
- Acquire the tools to perform a basic language sample analysis
- Make coherent written observations about the language and communication abilities of young children that include technical terminology.
- Be aware of the similarities and differences between monolingual and bilingual language acquisition processes
- Articulate differences between first and second language acquisition.

In addition, students in 541 will be expected to:

- Read and understand scholarly articles and book chapters related to language acquisition.
- Write a scholarly paper related to language acquisition and present the findings to the class.
- Lead a class discussion about interpretation of a language sample.
- Write an additional interpretation of a language sample analysis.

Failure to complete any of the 541 requirements will lead to failure of course, even if the student has an adequate number of points from other assignments.
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*The final examination schedule is set by the university. The instructor is not at liberty to change the time or place of the examination.*
GRADES: Grades are based on the following assignments. No make-up assignments or extra credit assignments will be provided. Final grades will not be rounded, due to the availability of bonus points.

**Online Tests (.5 point):** This course includes 1 mandatory online test (via d2l) that will not be graded. You will get full credit simply for taking the test. It is a work-style rating survey and group preference questionnaire that will be used to facilitate group interactions. This will be due no later than 1/13 at midnight.

**In-Class Tests (100 points):** There will be 4 in-class tests and 1 final examination. The first four tests will be non-cumulative, and based upon lectures and assigned readings. The final will be cumulative. Test format will include multiple choice and short answer questions as well as essay questions. Each test is worth 25 points. The best four test scores will be counted towards your grade. Because your grade is based upon the best 4 out of 5 grades, no make-up exams will be given.

**In-Class Observations (24 points):** As a class, we will view an example of a child at a particular stage of language development. Class-members will be expected to write up an observation of the example following guidelines given in class. There will be 8 observations. Each observation is worth 3 points. There are no make-ups for missed observations. Bonus points are available to compensate for unavoidable class absences.

**Theory of Language Acquisition Group Project (5 points):** In order to facilitate the group work that needs to be done for the observation project, each group will have a “practice run” where they must work together to turn in a 2-page paper. Each group will give an example of a child language behavior. They will discuss how this behavior supports/refutes/relates to different theories of language acquisition. References outside the text will be required. An electronic copy is due on midnight 1/20.

**Observation Project (50 points):** In this collaborative project, groups of 4-6 students will be required to complete an observation project documenting language acquisition across time. The project is worth 50 points, and a single grade will be given to the entire group. (One small portion will be individually graded). Students must also fill out a group contract, weekly progress reports and a work effort rating form for their group. Late assignments (either in-class or electronic) will lose 5 points per day. A hard copy is due in class on 3/6 and an electronic copy by midnight 3/6.

**Language Sample Analyses (75 points):** Students will become familiar with the tools of LSA through on-line practice of skills as well as through written interpretations of language samples. Students may choose to work individually or in groups for their online segments, but must produce their written interpretations individually. There will be four online practice modules: transcription, morphosyntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Students will have 3 attempts to complete each online module. After completing each online module, students will turn in a written interpretation based on the practice module. Each module is worth 15 points, with the exception of morphosyntax, which is worth 30 points. Late assignments will lose 2.5 points per
day. All assignments are due by midnight of the due date. Written interpretations should be submitted to the dropbox.

**Postings of Articles Related to Language Acquisition (8 points):** Students will attempt to transfer what they are learning about language acquisition to life outside the classroom by relating class topics to current events. Each student must make two postings, worth 4 points each. Students are required to post a link to a newspaper article, video clip, etc. that relates to language acquisition to the discussion board. The postings must come from the popular press, *NOT* from research articles. Each posting should include a brief paragraph summarizing the article and posing at least one question for discussion. No credit will be given for articles that have already been posted by another student, articles that are posted without the requisite paragraph, or articles that do not come from the popular press. The last day to post articles for credit is 4/17.

**Interpretation of Graduate Presentation (5 points):** Students will synthesize the information presented by one of the graduate students with one of the online articles posted about the topic. These single-page write-ups must be submitted by midnight on 4/12.

**Providing Constructive Feedback to Graduate Presenters (2.5 points):** Students will fill out a form providing constructive criticism regarding the presentation of graduate students. Forms must be turned in at the end of class on 4/10. For full credit, feedback must be provided for ALL presenters and must include at least one substantive comment (positive and constructive) for each presenter. This feedback will be compiled and provided to the graduate students. Identifying information will be removed.

**For 541 Only**
**Scholarly Paper (30 points):** Graduate-level students will write a scholarly paper based on research articles on a topic related to language acquisition. The paper is worth 30 points. Late assignments and failure to post a non-scholarly article online prior to your presentation will result in the loss of 5 points per day. A hard copy is due in class on 4/10. Additionally, an electronic copy is due in the dropbox by midnight of 4/10.

**Presentation of Findings (6 points):** Graduate-level students will create and deliver a 10-minute presentation to the class based on their paper, and then field questions. This presentation is worth 6 points. The date for the presentation is 4/10.

**Leading Class Discussion of Language Sample Interpretation (3 points):** Working solo or in a group, graduate students will lead a 15 minute class discussion of a language sample interpretation for the transcription, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics assignment. Students will turn in a written outline of their main points, facilitating questions, and planned activities on the day of their in-class discussion. It is strongly recommended that students meet with the instructor prior to this assignment. Dates for presentations are 3/22, 4/5, 4/19, and 5/1.

**Language Sample Interpretation (15 points):** Graduate-level students will receive a partially-analyzed language sample. They will write a detailed interpretation of the findings of the sample. A hard copy is due in class on 4/24.
FOR ALL STUDENTS - BONUS POINTS:

On-Line Discussion Points (3 points): Each time you post a comment or question to the class web page discussion section, you will earn .5 points. You may earn up to 3 points for your postings, as long as they are related to the class and are respectful and appropriate. You may post as many times as you like (and are encouraged to do so), but will only receive credit for the first 6. Posting must be made in a timely fashion in order for credit to be earned. Comments on class-related topics (observations, lectures, book chapters) will receive credit when they are posted up to the date of the exam that covers that topic. The last day to post comments for credit is 4/24. *The articles and paragraphs that you post for class credit do not apply towards bonus points.

Because bonus points are available, there will be NO rounding of grades.

For 441
TOTAL POINTS = 270
A  243-270
B  216-242
C  189-215
D  162-188
E  <162

For 541
TOTAL POINTS = 324
A  292-324
B  260-291
C  227-259
D  195-226
E  <194

NOTE ON ELECTRONICALLY-SUBMITTED PAPERS: The University asks that we include the following statement regarding TurnItIn: If you decide to take and continue in this course, you are agreeing to submit your papers online, when so instructed, to a plagiarism-prevention program called TurnItIn.com. When you set up your individual account with TurnItIn.com for this class, make sure you understand and consent to all the terms that the program provides you at that point. You should note that TurnItIn.com – always without your name and any personal information – will retain your paper as part of their database so that students who plagiarize from it can be detected. Because of this program, the vast majority of you who do your own work and cite your sources of information properly will not have to compete with students who commit undetected plagiarism. Anyone who has questions or problems with TurnItIn.com may talk privately about these with the instructor.

NOTE ON ELECTRONIC GRADING: It is the student’s responsibility to make sure he or she has been properly credited for completed work. All work will be graded promptly and the grades will be posted to the course website. If a grade is missing or incorrect, it is the student’s responsibility to alert the instructor and resolve the problem in a timely manner. All work must be received by the time of the final.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student’s submitted work must be the student’s own. Integrity is expected of every student in all academic work. Students must
adhere to the University’s Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found in its entirety at: http://catalog.arizona.edu/policies/974/acacode.htm. Any work submitted that does not follow the Code of Academic Integrity will result in a grade of E.

POLICY ON ELECTRONIC MEDIA USE DURING CLASS
There are pros and cons to using electronic media during class. The class will vote on use of electronic media in class. If so decided by a majority, use of smartphones, computers, tablets, etc. may be prohibited or limited to a section of the classroom during lectures. Students who violate this policy will be seen as disruptive and asked to leave the classroom. If the behavior re-occurs, offenders will be administratively dropped from the course. The only exception to this policy is students who require electronic media due to a disability. This need must be documented through the Disability Resource Center.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with Disability Resources (621-3268; drc.arizona.edu) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

NOTICE
Any student who does not accept or understand the contents and terms of this syllabus must notify the instructor within the first week of receiving the syllabus. Also, students who need to adjust their schedules for religious reasons must contact the instructor within the first week of class in order to make appropriate changes to the schedule.