

LINGUISTICS 433  
CHILD LANGUAGE: PHONOLOGY AND THE LEXICON

WINTER 2010

INSTRUCTOR: DR. SUZANNE CURTIN  
OFFICE: ADMIN 260  
PHONE: 220-7670  
E-MAIL: [scurtin@ucalgary.ca](mailto:scurtin@ucalgary.ca)  
COURSE WEBSITE: [www.blackboard.ucalgary.ca](http://www.blackboard.ucalgary.ca)  
OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE TIME: TUES/THURS 12:30-1:50  
LOCATION: EDC 384

READINGS: ALL ARTICLES FOR THE CLASS WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLINE.

PREREQUISITES: LING 203 AND 303.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will investigate the development of segmental and prosodic structure in children. To this end, we will explore infant speech perception, prelinguistic phases, word phonology, early phonology, the development of words, and the structure of the lexicon. Child language data will be informed by phonological theory (e.g., syllable structure, metrical structure, features, etc.). We will further examine the role of the lexicon in children's developing phonological system. Throughout the course we will discuss the role of the input, early abilities and the possible mechanisms for phonological acquisition.

COURSE WORK AND GRADING:

Assignments: 60% (1 x 10%, 1 x 20%, 1 x 30%)  
FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM 40% **DUE APRIL 22<sup>nd</sup>**

DEPARTMENT GRADE REQUIREMENT: A student may not register in any linguistics course unless a grade of at least C- has been achieved in each prerequisite for that course. Prerequisite for LING 433 is Linguistics 203 and 303.

GRADING. Each assignment will be assigned a numerical grade, based on the total number of possible points. The final letter grade will be assigned based on the sum of the total points awarded. The following grading system will be used:

A+	97-100	B+	84-87	C+	72-75	D+	56-59
A	92-96	B	80-83	C	67-71	D	50-55
A-	88-92	B-	76-79	C-	60-66	F	0-49

(See the University Calendar for interpretation of the letter grades.)

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: A completed Physician/Counsellor Statement may be required to confirm inability to turn in an assignment on time or for missing a presentation for health reasons. Late work will only be accepted in extremely exceptional circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor beforehand to request accommodation if the stated deadlines can not be met. Valid reasons include illness, birth, death, marriage, and religious holidays.

REAPPRAISAL OF GRADES: A student who feels that a piece of graded work has been unfairly graded shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of receiving the graded work. No reappraisal is permitted after the fifteen-day period.

SYLLABUS (dates are approximate):

Week 1 (Jan 12-14)

- **Speech Development: Infancy**
- Curtin, S. & Werker, J.F. (2007). Perceptual Foundations of Phonological Development. In M. Gareth Gaskell, G.T.M Altmann, P.Bloom, A. Caramazza and P. Levelt (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Psycholinguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Weeks 2 & 3 (Jan 19-28, *note: there will be no class on Jan 26.*)

- **Overview of Phonological Acquisition**
- Fikkert, Paula (in press). Acquiring phonology. In: P. de Lacy (ed.), *Handbook of Phonological Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Gerken, L.A. (1994) Child phonology: Past research, present questions, future directions. In M.A. Gernsbacher (ed), *Handbook of psycholinguistics*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 781-820.

ASSIGNMENT 1 (10%) Due Jan 28<sup>th</sup>

Week 4 (Feb 2-4)

- **Optimality Theory and Phonological Acquisition**
- Boersma, Paul & Clara C. Levelt (2003). Optimality theory and phonological acquisition. *Annual Review of Language Acquisition*, 3, 1–50.
- Fikkert, P, & de Hoop, H. (2009). Language acquisition in optimality theory. *Linguistics*, 47, 311-357.

Weeks 5 and 6 (Feb 9-11, Feb 23-25; **Reading Week Feb 13-21**)

- **Initial ranking and minimal violation**
- Gnanadesikan, Amalia. (2000). Markedness and faithfulness constraints in child phonology. ROA 67-0000. Revised version of 1995 paper.
- Jusczyk, Peter, Paul Smolensky, and Theresa Allocco. 2002. How English-learning infants respond to markedness and faithfulness constraints. *Language Acquisition*, 10(1), 31-73.
- Pater, Joe. (1997). Minimal violation and phonological development, *Language Acquisition*, 6(3), 201-253.

ASSIGNMENT 2 (20%) Due Feb 25<sup>th</sup>

Weeks 7 and 8 (March 2-11: *note, guest lecturer March 2, 11*)

- **Role of input: Evidence from Phonotactics**
- Kirk, C., & Demuth, K. (2006). Accounting for variability in 2-year-olds' production of coda consonants. *Language Learning and Development*, 2, 97-118.
- Seidel, Amanda and Buckley, Eugene. (2005). On the Learning of Arbitrary Phonological Rules. *Language Learning and Development*, 1(3&4), 289–316
- Zamuner, T.S., Gerken, L.A., & Hammond, M. (2004). Phonotactic probabilities in young children's production of coda consonants. *Journal of Child Language*, 31, 515-536.

Weeks 9 and 10 (March 16-March 25)

- **Lexical Development: Phonological Specificity of Representations**
- Curtin, S. (2009). Twelve-month-olds learn word-object associations differing only in stress patterns. *Journal of Child Language*, 36, 1157-1165.
- Fikkert, P. (in press). Developing representations and the emergence of phonology: evidence from perception and production. *Laboratory Phonology*, 10.
- Pater, J., Stager, C.L., & Werker, J.F. (2004). The lexical acquisition of phonological contrasts. *Language*, 80(3), 361-379.
- Stager, C.L., & Werker, J.F. (1997). Infants listen for more phonetic detail in speech perception than in word learning tasks. *Nature*, 388, 381-382.
- Werker, J.F., Cohen, L.B., Lloyd, V., Stager, C.L., & Cassasola, M. (1998). Acquisition of word-object associations by 14-month-old infants. *Developmental Psychology*, 34(6), 1289-1309.

ASSIGNMENT 3 (30%) Due March 30<sup>th</sup>

Weeks 11 and 12 (March 30 –April 8)

- **Lexical Development: Vowels and Consonants**
- Curtin, S., Fennell, C., & Escudero, P. (2009). Weighting of acoustic cues explains patterns of word-object associative learning. *Developmental Science*. 12,725-731.
- Mani, N., & Plunkett, K. (2007). Phonological specificity of vowels and consonants in early lexical representations. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 57, 252-272.
- Nazzi, T. (2005) Use of phonetic specificity during the acquisition of new words: differences between consonants and vowels. *Cognition*, 98(1), 13-30.
- Nespor, M., Peña, M., & Mehler, J. (2003). On the different roles of vowels and consonants in speech processing and language acquisition. *Lingue e Linguaggio*, ii, 221–247.

Week 13 (April 13-15)

- **Mechanisms**
- Höhle, B. (2009). Bootstrapping mechanisms in first language acquisition. *Linguistics*, 47, 359-382.
- Werker, J.F. & Curtin, S. (2005). PRIMIR: A Developmental Framework of Infant Speech Processing. *Language Learning and Development*, 1(2), 197-234.
- White, K.S., Peperkamp, S., Kirk, C, & Morgan, J.L. (2008). Rapid acquisition of phonological alternations by infants, *Cognition*, 107, 238-265.

## Course Regulations

### Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly

and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

### **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:

- a) 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),
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- c) the whole work (e.g. an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) 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. Some course assignments call for students to work in groups. 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.

### **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 14 days after the start of this course.

### **Absence From A Test/Exam**

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

### **Student Organizations**

Linguistics students may wish to join the U of C Linguistics Club (Verbatim). They are located in SS 803.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 220-3911 [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 220-3913 [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is **Jan 22nd, 2010**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Apr 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010**.

### **Undergraduate Advisors**

The Undergraduate Advisors for the department are Dr. Suzanne Curtin and Dr. Martha McGinnis. If you need advice on any aspect of the program in Linguistics please contact them at: [ling.undergrad@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ling.undergrad@ucalgary.ca).