



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

LING 516.4
First Language Acquisition
Term: Winter 2022
Tuesday 15:30 – 18:15 in person, SA 123

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Dimitrios Skordos

OFFICE HOURS: by appointment via email

E-MAIL: dimitrios.skordos@ucalgary.ca *I will respond to e-mails within 48 hs during weekdays.*

TELEPHONE NUMBER: N/A

DESCRIPTION

Even though humans share overall quite similar physical environments bound by the same laws of physics and experienced through the same sensory apparatus and bodily affordances, different languages describe space and motion in different ways. In order to be competent language users, children need to acquire the biases and preferences (both syntactic and semantic) of their native language(s) with respect to space and motion. This course is a graduate level seminar on how humans acquire spatial language, and how the acquisition process interacts with their conceptualizations of space and motion events.

OBJECTIVES

We will explore theoretical issues and approaches regarding language acquisition, including the contributions of the innate endowment of the human mind, as opposed to environmental exposure to language, focusing primarily on how languages describe space and motion, how children acquire spatial language and how spatial language interacts with space conceptualization. We will largely focus on typical language development, but we will also look at evidence from bilingualism, as well as atypical language development. In the course, we will critically examine evidence about on the conceptualization of space and the acquisition of spatial language from a variety of sources. The course will conclude by you putting together your own experimental study of language development on a specific topic.

OUTCOMES

Students will become familiar with theoretical issues and empirical data in first language acquisition, particularly on space and motion events. They will develop the critical skills necessary to evaluate empirical findings and claims and the basic skill set to ask theoretically interesting questions and to develop sound empirical studies to test those. Finally, they will learn how to present on developmental subjects in front of an academic audience and how to write up their proposal for a study according to disciplinary standards.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

N/A. Primary research papers will be provided by the instructor on D2L.

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

N/A



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COURSE NOTES

The course will meet as scheduled every Tuesday between 15:30 – 18:15 in SA 123

Here are the technology requirements for the course per university guidelines:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates
- A current and updated web browser · Webcam/Camera (built-in or external)
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled
- Stable internet connection

This is an advanced undergraduate seminar cross-listed with a graduate course. Classes typically include presentation of material by the Instructor and students, and extensive class discussion. Barring exceptional circumstances and unforeseen events, you are expected to attend all classes, as the critical in-class discussion of primary research papers forms the backbone of the seminar.

Class discussion and practice will be an essential part of the course, therefore you are required to complete all readings before coming to the discussion sessions.

Any accommodation for late assignments will only be considered in cases of an unavoidable circumstance of sufficient gravity. Please see D2L for an exhaustive list of class policies and expectations.

ASSESSMENT

- Class Presentation of Research Papers: 20% (2x10%)
- Class Presentation of Final Project: 30%
- Final Project Write-Up: 50%

All assessments contribute to successfully pass the course. Assessment of presentations will take place during class meetings and will be scheduled in consultation with the students. The Final Project Write-up will be evaluated through a D2L submission due at the end of the semester.

GRADING SCALE

A+ = 100-97; A = 93-96; A- = 92-88; B+ = 87-83; B = 82-78; B- = 77-73; C+ = 72-68; C = 67-63; C- = 62-58; D+ = 57-53; D = 52-50; F = 49%

INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

Academic misconduct

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit: <https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>, and <https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>



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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>.)

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca

Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate.

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

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca.



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INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Links to information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.