

Language Research Centre
Course Information Sheet
First and Second Language Acquisition: Similarities and Differences
LANG 699.02/ LING 633.01
Fall 2008 (Block Week – Sept. 2-5, 2008)
Location: CH D425
TWRf 10-12; 2-4pm

Instructor's Name & e-mail: Dr. Jürgen M. Meisel jmmeisel@ucalgary.ca

Office location & hours: CH D323, W 11-12

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Instructor's web page: <http://fis.ucalgary.ca/profiles/juergen-m-meisel>

Description:

This course is concerned with the question of how second language acquisition differs from both monolingual and bilingual first language development. Children acquiring one (L1) or more (2L1) languages from birth are able to acquire a full grammatical competence of their language(s) by mere exposure to the primary linguistic data in interacting with caretakers and peers. The focus will therefore be on successive acquisition of languages and the role of age of onset of acquisition in shaping the course of acquisition and in determining the ultimately attained grammatical knowledge in successive (child second language, cL2, and adult second language, aL2) acquisition.

Prerequisites:

Students must have successfully completed at least an introduction to linguistics. Additional courses in syntax or morphology are recommended as background preparation. Students should prepare for the course by reading the titled listed below.

Distribution of Grades:

A+ = 95-100; A = 90-94; A- = 85-89; B+ = 80-84; B = 75-79; B- = 71-74; C+ = 67-70; C = 62-66; C- = 58-61; D+ = 54-57; D = 50-53; F < 50%

Grading Scale:

Active participation in class	15%
Attendance at & a written summary of one of the guest lectures	10%
Abstract of a term paper	25%
Final version of a term paper	50%

Required Texts:

Maria Teresa Guasti (2002). *Language Acquisition: The Growth of Grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, chapters 1 & 2.

Lydia White (2004). *Second Language Acquisition and Universal Grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapters 1 & 2.

Recommended Texts & Materials:

A bibliography including the reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard

Course Notes:

Students are also required to attend 3 additional lectures which are associated with this course. These lectures will be given by other scholars throughout the Fall term.

Students with Disabilities:

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 during the first day of classes.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that "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."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources: footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.