



Instructor	Prof. Kristen Syrett	kristen.syrett@rutgers.edu
In-person Meetings	Wednesdays 12:10-1:30 pm Academic Building 4450	(required!) (EAST Wing)
Student Support Hours	Tuesdays 3-4 pm Thursdays 12-1 pm and by appointment	
Prerequisite	615:201 (Introduction to Linguistic Theory)	

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on first language acquisition and development in children.

- We provide an overview of child language development in the major subfields of Linguistics: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
- We explore the cognitive, biological, environmental, and social-cultural influences on linguistic knowledge; analyze the major competing theoretical approaches to language acquisition and development; cover experimental methodologies used to assess linguistic competence and performance; and review the empirical data used to identify developmental milestones, distinguishing between linguistic competence and performance.
- We briefly extend this 'typical baseline' into bilingualism, second language acquisition, and language acquisition and development in special populations.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

In this course you will

- be able to identify the linguistic developmental milestones from infancy through the early school years
- understand the ways in which cognitive, biological, environmental, and social-cultural factors interact in the process of language development
- become acquainted with methodologies used in the field of child language research on different populations
- review empirical data used to plot language development in children
- become familiar with the major theoretical frameworks and proposals to account for language acquisition and development
- communicate related issues to a 'lay audience' such as parents and teachers to promote education, a connection between the classroom and the world, and a broader understanding of the process of language development

GRADING SCALE

You will be graded according to the following scale.

A:	≥90
B+:	85 to 89
B:	80 to 84
C+:	75 to 79
C:	70 to 74
D:	60 to 69
F:	<60

I will issue Warning grades for students who appear to be struggling with attendance, participation, and/or academic performance. If you receive a Warning grade, let's talk!

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

- You will be assessed according to four main components, which figure into your course grade.
- These assessments are your opportunities to consolidate what you have learned and take it to the next level. These should be opportunities for you to recognize your progress in learning and meeting the course objectives. I value being fair, and generous in assessing student effort. I want you to succeed and love this topic!
- When you see a grade in Canvas, you are welcome to check for accuracy relative to the rubric for that assessment. I will not debate grades once they are assigned. Student support hours are not for that purpose. Let's use this time productively!

1. Attendance and participation 10%

- You must attend every in-person class or synchronous remote class, and actively participate. Ask questions and share contributions using the variety of platforms available to you! Please see the rubric in Canvas.
- Our class will be much more lively and enjoyable, and you will learn a LOT more if you ask questions, contribute to discussions, and support each other!

2. Weekly posts 20%

- Each week, you will participate in the designated post on our Canvas website. The format of these posts will vary from week to week; instructions and a rubric will accompany individual discussion. These should be enjoyable and invite you to think and learn!
- Your posts must be substantive, be at least one paragraph in length, and follow the instructions.
- Discussion posts are **due no later than Monday at 10 pm**, no exceptions unless approved by me in advance. (Life during a pandemic happens, so email me in advance if something urgent or pressing arises compromising this deadline.) Posts remain open until 11 pm (after the deadline), to allow for the possibility of *partial credit for late assignments* (-1 pt) as necessary.
- There will be 12 posts; the lowest two will be dropped.

3. Group project 40%

- There will be a group project, which is your chance to work with each other and creatively bring together what you have learned in the class.
- The purpose of this project is to help you to learn how to communicate what you've learned in our class to a lay audience outside of class in a clear, fun, and engaging way, and to make connections between the course content and the people and world around you. I will provide you with clear instructions and inspiration.

- You will work together in groups of 5 or fewer. I will assign groups a few weeks into class.
- The project will take place in 8 components, each worth 5 points (5% of your grade). (1)-(6) submitted and graded as a group, (7)-(8) submitted and graded individually:
 - a) Topic, proposed format, suggested division of labor, and timeline with associated responsibilities
 - b) List of 5 references with annotated summary with relevance to project, in APA format
 - c) Draft #1 – rough draft
 - d) Peer review and constructive critique of another group
 - e) Draft #2 – rough draft incorporating peer feedback
 - f) Presentation of final project
 - g) Draft #3 - Final (final!) project with summary of individual contributions
 - h) Reflection on personal contribution, group project experience and final project.

4. Final exam (cumulative) 30%

- The final exam is your chance to shine and show me and yourself how much you've learned.
- If you have been attending classes, following the materials, meeting with me during student support hours, doing the weekly posts, and have contributed actively to the group project, you have set yourself up for success on the final!

READINGS

- All readings can be found in the designated Canvas modules. I have carefully chosen these readings across various textbooks and language acquisition/development resources.
 - Clark, Eve. (2018). *First language acquisition*, 3rd Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (CLA)
 - Golinkoff, Roberta, & Hirsh-Pasek, Kathy. *How babies talk*. Plume. (GOL-HP)
 - Guasti, Maria Teresa. *Language acquisition*. Cambridge: MIT Press. (GUA)
 - Hoff, Erika. (2014). *Language development*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning. (HOFF)
 - Jusczyk Peter. (2000). *The discovery of spoken language*. Cambridge: MIT Press. (JUS)
 - Saxton, Matthew. (2017). *Child language*. London: Sage. (SAX)
 - Tomasello, Michael, & Akhtar, Nameera. (2000). Five questions for any theory of word learning. In Marc Marschark (Ed.), *Becoming a word learner* (pp. 179-186). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (TOM-AKH)
 - Woodward, Amanda. (2000). Constraining the problem space in early word learning. In Marc Marschark (Ed.), *Becoming a word learner* (pp. 81-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (WOOD)

CLASS PROTOCOLS

Academic Integrity

- You are expected to know and follow the Rutgers University policy on Academic Integrity:
- <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>
- Cheating, plagiarizing, presenting someone else's work as your own, and not properly acknowledging another student's contribution **will not be tolerated**. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. Making available notes or other materials from this course, especially in return for compensation, is also discouraged.

Attendance and Absences

- You are expected to attend and participate in every class and actively participate. If you anticipate that you will be absent for a class whatever reason, you must notify me in writing via email as soon as possible AND report your absence here: <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>
- Recent circumstances have presented mental and physical health challenges for many. Time management is difficult. People make mistakes. I recognize this, and I understand. I will never ask you for a medical note. At the same time, I will hold you to the highest standard of participation and engagement that you are able to provide. We're in this together, and I want you to succeed. Being present and active are preconditions for success. I'm always happy to talk and work with you.
- Please note: Not every reported absence is excused! Do not assume that because you have simply reported that you'll be absent, there are no consequences. You will still be responsible for the content, and you should coordinate with a classmate to cover what was learned in that class.
- University policy excuses absences due to religious observance or participation in Rutgers-approved activities, and permits students to make up work missed for these circumstances. If this applies to you, please let me know at least a week in advance.
- Students who miss more than an occasional class (for any reason at all, excused or otherwise!) should consult with the Dean of Students. It will be extremely difficult for you to perform successfully in the class if you miss multiple classes. Your groups also depend on you for the group project.

Civility and Professionalism

In this class, we will be supportive and respectful of each other, and show each other grace as we learn together. All course participants will be guided by professionalism, civility, and inclusion. We will welcome diverse opinions, backgrounds, and perspectives. We will demonstrate respect for each other in our classroom discussions and in any online correspondence.

Disability Services and Support

I am very happy to accommodate students who have a documented disability and a letter of accommodation. Please provide this to me at the start of the semester. You are responsible for coordinating taking your exam with the Office of Disability Services well in advance of the designated exam date (see course schedule). Find out more here: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/my-accommodations>

Extra Credit

- Some faculty and graduate students in the Department of Linguistics (including me and my students!) do experimental research on language. Some of this research is on child language and language acquisition and development, so it is directly relevant to the content of this course. You have the opportunity to raise your final grade by up to 2 % points through participation in a Linguistics experiment. You will get 1 point of credit for every half hour of experimental participation. Experiments are offered through the Linguistics department experiment management system (sona) here: <http://rutgerslinguistics.sona-systems.com/>
- Towards the beginning of the semester, your name and email will be added to the experiment system. You will be issued an anonymous id to participate in experiments through this system. Once Linguistics experiments are posted, you can sign up online.
- Any student enrolled in a Linguistics undergraduate course is eligible to participate in Linguistics experiments, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language status, or impairments, disorders, or disabilities. You cannot be denied participation for any of these reasons. If you are taking multiple Linguistics courses that allow for experimental participation to count towards extra credit, you are responsible for making sure you have assigned the credit correctly through the experiment system.

Student Support Hours

- These hours are there for you! Please actively take advantage of them. I enjoy setting aside this time to talk with you, because they help us get to know each other more, and allow me to learn how best to support you.
- I invite you to use this time to go over the course content, help organize your notes, figure out effective study strategies, talk about post-bac or research plans—whatever would support you.
- Appointments can be one-on-one or in small groups.
- This is also a good time for me to learn more about your style of communication (which may help when I am reading your writing), or your career plans (which may help if you ask me for a reference letter later on!).

Other Rutgers Resources

Academic Calendar

<https://scheduling.rutgers.edu/scheduling/academic-calendar>

Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

Date	Topic	Readings / Assignment
Wed 1/19 continue	1 <i>Introduction to Course and Language Development</i> <i>Intro to Language Development</i>	SAX ch1, CLA ch 1
Mon 1/24		<i>Discussion Post 1 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 1/26 continue	2.1 <i>Developmental Milestones</i> 2.2 <i>Developmental Milestones</i>	GUA ch 2 pp. 47-53 HOFF ch 1 pg. 20 GOL-HP ch 2-8 JUS pp. 174-185
Mon 1/31		<i>Discussion Post 2 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 2/2 continue	3.1 <i>Theories of Language Acquisition and Development</i> 3.2 <i>Theories of LA/LD</i>	TOM-AKH HOFF pp. 20-21 GUA ch 1 pp. 8-19 SAX ch 10 JUS ch 2 pp. 17-27
Mon 2/7		<i>Discussion Post 3 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 2/9 continue	4.1 <i>Methods of Studying LA/LD</i> 4.2 <i>Methods of Studying LA/LD</i>	GUA ch 2 pp. 24-28 HOFF ch 1 pp. 21-26 HOFF ch 3 pp. 74-89 JUS appendix
Mon 2/14		<i>Discussion Post 4 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 2/16 continue	5.1 <i>The Role of the Adult</i> 5.2 <i>The Role of the Adult</i>	GOL-HP pp. 25-37 HOFF ch 3 pp. 97-106
Mon 2/21		<i>Discussion Post 5 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 2/23 continue	6.1 <i>Acquisition of Phonology</i> 6.2 <i>Acquisition of Phonology</i>	HOFF ch 4 GOL-HP pp. 23-25 GUA ch 2 CLA ch 14 JUS ch 4 pp. 48-58
Mon 2/28		<i>Discussion Post 6 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 3/2 continue	7.1 <i>Acquisition of Morphology</i> <i>Introduction to Group Project</i> 7.2 <i>Acquisition of Morphology</i>	CLA ch 8 HOFF ch 6 pp. 170-184
Mon 3/7		<i>Discussion Post 7 due by 10 pm</i>
Wed 3/9 continue	8.1 <i>Acquisition of the Lexicon</i> <i>Photo activity opens up</i> 8.2 <i>Acquisition of the Lexicon</i>	HOFF ch 5 JUS pp. 10-11 SAX ch 6 GUA ch 3 pp. 55-80 WOOD
Fri 3/11 Mon 3/21		<i>Group Project (a) due by 10 pm</i> <i>Discussion Post 8 due by 10 pm</i>
3/12-3/20	Rutgers Spring Break!	

Date	Topic	Readings / Assignment
Mon 3/21	(reminder after return from Break)	Discussion Post 8 due by 10 pm
Wed 3/23	9.1 Acquisition of Syntax	HOFF ch 6 184-203 GUA ch 3 90-97
continue	9.2 Acquisition of Syntax	
Fri 3/25 Mon 3/28		Group Project (b) due by 10 pm Discussion Post 9 due by 10 pm Child Photo due by 10 pm
Wed 3/30	10.1 Acquisition of Semantics	CLA ch 6
continue	10.2 Acquisition of Semantics	
Fri 4/1 Mon 4/4		Group Project (c) due by 10 pm Discussion Post 10 due by 10 pm
Wed 4/6	11.1 Acquisition of Pragmatics	CLA ch 12
continue	11.2 Acquisition of Pragmatics	HOFF ch 7
Fri 4/8 Mon 4/11		Group Project (d) due by 10 pm Discussion Post 11 due by 10 pm
Wed 4/13	12.1 The Critical Period Hypothesis + Biology, Cognition, Memory, and Language Acquisition	GUA ch 1 pp. 20-21 JUS pp. 200-204
continue		
Mon 4/18		Discussion Post 12 due by 10 pm
Wed 4/20	13 Bilingualism and L2 Acquisition	CLA ch 14 HOFF ch 9
continue	14 LA and LD in Special Populations	HOFF ch 11
Fri 4/15		Group Project (e) due by 10 pm
Wed 4/27	13 Last Class and Group Project Showcase	Group Project (f)
Fri 4/29		Group Project (g) AND (h) due by 10 pm
Mon 5/2	Last day to earn extra credit	
Mon 5/9	Final Exam Due by 11 am!	