

HESP 400 Spring 2008

Speech and Language Development in Children

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00-12:15, Lefrak 2008

Instructor: Prof. Rochelle Newman rnewman@hesp.umd.edu (301) 405-4226

Office hours: Tuesday, 12:15-2; Wednesday, 12-1; or by appointment.

Office: 0141BB Lefrak Hall

Class web page:

http://www.bsos.umd.edu/hesp/Newman/Newman_classes/Newman400/HESP400.html

This contains links to a copy of the syllabus and to copies of the power-point presentations I use in class. These power point presentations are outlines; they are not intended to substitute for coming to class, and will not contain all the information from lecture you are expected to learn.

Overview: The main emphasis of this course is on the acquisition of language by typically-developing children. Most of the material covered is based on first language acquisition in children raised in English-speaking environments. Issues related to language acquisition by children from linguistically diverse backgrounds will be considered. The course focuses primarily on how children progress from early perceptual skills and prelinguistic vocalization to the level at which they produce and understand complex sentences, although attention will be given to the development of some higher-order language abilities. Greater focus will be placed on the preschool period than on school-aged language development. Major language subsystems covered include phonological, morphological, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic; we will also cover theories about how language develops. Finally, the relationship between oral language and literacy will be addressed (ASHA Standard III-C).

Course text: J. Berko Gleason (2004) The development of language (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Learning outcomes: After completing this course, a student will be able to:

- Discuss the typical range of language abilities shown by children at a variety of ages.
- Discuss the typical developmental timecourse of phonological, morphological, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic acquisition
- Summarize models and theories of language development
- Contrast language acquisition in humans vs. nonhuman primates, and the acquisition of first and second languages
- Integrate knowledge of spoken language and its acquisition with investigations into reading and literacy

Students will receive a signed learning outcomes form for their ASHA portfolio at the end of the semester if they supply a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Course evaluation:

1. Two exams worth 22% of class grade each and a final exam worth 30%.

The exams may consist of any combination of essay, short answer, true/false, and/or multiple choice questions. They will be given at the start of class on the day scheduled. If you come to class late, you will have less time for your exam.

All exams will require you to apply information from the book and lecture to new situations. Exams will include information from the textbooks that was not discussed during lecture, and information presented in lecture that was not mentioned in the book. Thus, failure to attend class regularly, or failure to complete the required readings will almost certainly result in a poor grade for the class.

The final exam will emphasize material covered since the 2nd exam, but will include a cumulative portion as well. Possible questions for the cumulative portion will be given out in advance of the exam; one of those questions will then appear on the exam itself. You will be allowed to bring in a single 3x5 card of notes for this final exam. You may use both sides of the card, and may print onto it. However, you may NOT do anything to enlarge the space you have to greater than 3x5 (x 2 sides). This means you may not have flaps, any overlapping pieces of paper stuck to it, a larger-than-allowed card, or anything else that provides additional space. I reserve the right to inspect cards at any time. If I find that your note card does not meet these requirements, I can and will, at my discretion, either take away your notecard altogether, rip it in parts (and give you part of it only), or (if the exam has already begun) fail you or lower your grade.

2. Transcription assignments: 26% (total)

There are a total of 7 different assignments based on a set of child speech transcriptions and audio samples, worth a total of 26% of your class grade. (As a result, failure to complete these assignments means the best grade you could earn in the class is a C.) They must be turned in no later than the start of class on the day they are due. The copies of the actual transcriptions will be provided and are yours to keep; the audio CD must be returned as part of the last assignment. You are always free to turn in assignments early, but late assignments lose a letter grade for each day they are late. Copies of the assignment, and the transcripts, are available on the class web site.

Other HW worksheets will be optional, but recommended for learning the material.

Plus/minus grades will be used for this class.

Make-up exams will only be allowed for university-mandated and officially verified reasons. If an absence can be anticipated in advance, you must take the make-up exam **PRIOR** to the scheduled date. In order to find an appropriate time for this make-up, you will need to inform me at least a week in advance of your absence. If you miss an exam because of an excused event that was unforeseeable (such as illness or a death in your family), you must still notify me that you will not be taking the exam prior to the start of the exam itself, and the makeup will need to take place as soon as you return to campus. You will not be able to make up exams for other absences.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating on academic work will not be tolerated in any form, and will be subject to strong penalties in this class and the university system. If you cheat on an exam or on an assignment, you risk failing the class.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, falsifying any information in a citation or academic exercise, using unauthorized materials in any academic exercise, or helping (or attempting to help) another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes sharing answers on assignments.

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>.

Other Information

If anyone has special needs or disabilities that require special consideration (such as modification of seating or testing), please see me after class or during office hours so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged.

Plus/minus grades will be used for this class.

Syllabus of meeting dates, topics and readings (subject to change):

January 29: Introduction; explanation of syllabus.

January 31: Animal Communication

February 5: The chimp language studies
Read Chapter 1

Feb 7. Critical periods (and feral children).

February 12: Summary on the nature/nurture debate; Infant perceptual underpinnings

February 14 & 19: Infant cognitive & communicative underpinnings (Piaget's theory;
Joint attention)
Read Chapter 2

February 21: **Exam 1**

February 26: Early speech perception studies/distinguishing languages; Babbling into speech
Read Chapter 3

February 28: Pronunciation (Cluster reduction and phonological errors)
Optional practice exercise 1

- March 4: Identifying new words
Optional practice exercise 2
- March 6, 11: Word learning; Catch-up/review
Read Chapter 4
Assignments (2!) on phonology & phonological processes due March 6
- March 13: **Exam 2**
- SPRING BREAK
- March 25: First words & word combos
Assignment on lexical items due
- March 27: NO CLASS (and no office hours March 26)
- April 1: Morphology
Read Chapter 5
- April 3: MLU
- April 8: Early grammar comprehension
- April 10: Pragmatics/communicative competence
Read Chapter 6
Assignments (2!) on MLU & grammatical morphemes due
Optional practice exercises 3, 4
- April 15: Individual differences
Read Chapter 8
- April 17, 22: Reading, writing, and spelling
Read Chapter 10
- April 24 - May 1: Linguistic theory & early views; Learnability & Negative evidence
Read Chapter 7
Assignment on adult speech due April 24
- May 6: Bilingualism
- May 8: Atypical Language Development
Assignment on negative evidence (and the CD!) due May 8
- May 13: Finish Atypical Lang. Dev.; Conclusions & Review
- FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 15 8:00-10:00 am