

ENG 553: ISSUES IN FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Linguistics Section • Department of English Studies • University of Cyprus

Spring Semester 2018: Mondays & Thursdays, 12.00–13.30 @ Room XΩΔ2 010

ONLINE COURSE MATERIALS: <http://blackboard.ucy.ac.cy>

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Office Hours: Mon & Thu 13.30–14.30 by appointment (in class / kleanthi@ucy.ac.cy)

DESCRIPTION

This course introduces current developments in the linguistic study of language acquisition. It offers a general overview of Universal Grammar and the biolinguistic principles of language, and then proceeds to specific interests in the morphosyntax of first language acquisition, but also introduce bi- and multilingualism, issues in second language acquisition and learning, heritage language use, and language attrition. Students will be able to assess language variation from the vantage point of the Principles & Parameters framework and its contemporary version with special reference to language development. They will also become familiar with basic notions of first language acquisition and advanced topics on language interfaces and processing along the way. The theoretical framework will help students appreciate the linguistic basis for much of the research over the past three decades.

ASSESSMENT

Regular attendance is strongly advised! Besides the class lectures, you will be graded as follows:

1. **homework** *40% of the final grade* [2 sets; see syllabus]
2. **presentation** *20% of the final grade* [T.B.A.; ca. 10 minutes]
3. **final paper** *40% of the final grade* [May 22; ca. 3,000 words]
4. presence & active **participation** in class throughout (± x grade points)

Don't forget: This is a small class and if you miss one, it will be noticed. If you miss more than once, notice will be taken more than once too—and if you're not around, you can't participate actively. I take a tough stance on plagiarism, so familiarize yourselves with the dangers (and read my Manifesto).

Homework: There will be two sets of exercises to be handed in as homework one week later. These will be given out after around the first third of the course (February 15, due February 22 in class) and the second (March 19, due March 26 in class), tracking the material covered in these periods.

Presentation: You will give an in-class presentation of a published article I assign for ca. 10 minutes, followed by discussion. Each presentation will link to the chapter material we will cover that day. Your presentation topic will be assigned in the first day of classes (January 15 in class).

Paper: You should start thinking about your term paper early on. The topic is completely your choice but it should be related to the course; you should also check with me for approval and additional readings. The deadline of the final paper is towards the end of the exam period (May 22 at 12 noon).

READINGS

We will follow one textbook and discuss relevant articles throughout the semester. You should also make an effort to read beyond the assigned readings! You can ask me for more.

M. Teresa Guasti (2017). *Language Acquisition*, 2nd edn. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. [= G17]

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Original version (15 January 2018)

SCHEDULE

<u>WEEK 1:</u>	January 15	<i>course overview & introduction</i>
	January 18	Introduction to First Language Acquisition (G17: ch. 1)
<u>WEEK 2:</u>	January 22	First Sounds in L1A (G17: ch. 2)
	January 25	First Sounds in L1A (G17: ch. 2)
<u>WEEK 3:</u>	January 29	The Lexicon in L1A (G17: ch. 3)
	February 1	The Lexicon in L1A (G17: ch. 3)
<u>WEEK 4:</u>	February 5	The Lexicon in L1A (G17: ch. 3)
	February 8	Verbal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 4)
<u>WEEK 5:</u>	February 12	Verbal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 4)
	February 15	Verbal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 4) [HWK1: due Feb 22]
<u>WEEK 6:</u>	February 19	NO CLASS [Clean Monday]
	February 22	Nominal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 5)
<u>WEEK 7:</u>	February 26	Nominal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 5)
	March 1	Nominal Syntax in L1A (G17: ch. 5)
<u>WEEK 8:</u>	March 5	A'-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 6)
	March 8	A'-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 6)
<u>WEEK 9:</u>	March 12	A'-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 6)
	March 15	A-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 7)
<u>WEEK 10:</u>	March 19	A-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 7) [HWK2: due Mar 26]
	March 22	A-Movement in L1A (G17: ch. 7)
<u>WEEK 11:</u>	March 26	Binding Theory in L1A (G17: ch. 8)
	March 29	Binding Theory in L1A (G17: ch. 8)
<u>WEEK 12:</u>	April 16	Quantification in L1A (G17: ch. 9)
	April 19	Pragmatics in L1A (G17: ch. 9)
<u>WEEK 13:</u>	April 23	Language Pathology and L1A (G17: ch. 10)
	April 26	Bilingual L1A (G17: ch. 11)
<u>WEEK 14:</u>	April 30	Early L2A (G17: ch. 11)
	May 3	<i>course recap & further issues</i>
<u>FINAL:</u>	May 22	term paper on any approved topic of your choice (by email)