EDUCATION 58
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

WINTER 2015

General Information
Class Meeting Times: (10A) T Th 10.00–11.50am
X-hour: W 3.00–3.50pm
Class Meeting Location: Moore B03

Professor: Sean Kang, Ph.D.
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(603) 646-9051
www.dartmouth.edu/~cogedlab
Office: Raven 210
Office Hours: T Th 12.00–1.30pm

Course Description
How do infants acquire language so quickly and effortlessly? Why is it relatively difficult to
learn a new language as an adult? This course will explore the biological, social, familial, and
educational factors that enable and contribute language acquisition and development from
infancy to adolescence and beyond. We will examine both typical and atypical language
development, and consider the implications of individual differences and language diversity
for educational settings.

Course Goals
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to: (i) understand the developmental
trajectories of various components of language and the factors that influence them, (ii) read
and analyse scientific journal articles, (iii) summarise and integrate important research
related to the course topics, and (iv) recognise the importance of language in the classroom,
and discuss possible implications for educational practice and policy.

Required Readings
All the readings for this course are articles from scientific journals, and the PDFs are
available on Canvas or electronic reserves.

Class Format
Class meetings will include lectures, videos, discussions, and quizzes. You are expected to be
present. You will be responsible for all class material. X-periods will sometimes be used
during this course, so please ensure you are available during those times. Your performance
will be evaluated by 2 exams, 7 thought papers, 13 short quizzes, and your participation in
class.

Methods of Assessment

1. Participation (10%)

There is ample evidence that active participation during the learning process leads to
better retention than passive, receptive learning. To promote active learning and an
enjoyable, interactive classroom environment, class participation is encouraged and the
quality of your comments, questions, and responses will count towards your participation
grade in the course.
2. Thought papers (18%; each worth 3%)

To promote analytical reading of the assigned journal articles, adequate preparation for each class, and cogent writing, you will submit a “thought paper” about once a week (7 times in total throughout the course). The thought paper should consist of your reflection on at least one of the assigned readings for the day, and could include: (i) a summary of the paper/study, (ii) your critique of the methodology/conclusions, (iii) ideas you might have about follow-up research, (iv) unanswered questions, and (v) connections you see between the current reading(s) and previously covered topics.

Your thought paper should be typed, double-spaced, and not exceed 500 words (please report the word count at the end of each paper). Thought papers should be submitted via Canvas by 5pm the day before class (e.g., if you are writing a thought paper for Thursday classes, the deadline for submission is Wednesday 5pm), so that I will have time to look through them before class. Each thought paper can earn a maximum score of 3 points. Only your 6 highest scoring thought papers will count towards your final grade (i.e., your lowest score on a thought paper will be dropped).

3. Daily quizzes (20%; each quiz worth 2%)

Research has shown that having many short study sessions (distributed practice) leads to better learning than few long study sessions (massed practice; AKA cramming). Moreover, information acquired through distributed learning persists for a long time, whereas information acquired through massed learning tends to be forgotten rapidly. To promote distributed learning, there will be a short quiz (~5min) at the start of virtually every class. Each quiz will consist of ~4 multiple-choice, short-answer, or true/false questions covering information presented during the previous class.

There will be a total of 13 quizzes. Only the best 10 scores will be counted for any individual. There will be no makeup quizzes. If you miss a quiz, your score will be 0 for that quiz.

4. Exams (50%; each exam worth 25%)

Because daily quizzes cannot address all the content of the course and do not permit more thoughtful, essay responses, there will be 2 written exams. These exams will consist of short essay questions, and will be held during normal class hours. The midterm exam will be on February 10 (Tuesday), and the final exam will be on March 10 (Tuesday). The final exam will be cumulative (i.e., covers material from the entire course). Please mark your calendars now to ensure that you are able to take the exams as scheduled.

5. Research participation (2%)

The goal of this assignment is to provide you with a firsthand perspective of participating in a research study. Volunteer to participate in one or more research studies conducted by any research lab in the Education Department, totaling two hours of participation (e.g., one 2-hour study or two 1-hour studies). Specific instructions on how to sign up for a research study are posted on Canvas. To get credit, you must hand in a signed EDUC58 Participant Confirmation Form (one signed copy for each study in which you participate) to me in class on or before Tuesday, Mar 10th. A copy of the form is posted on Canvas.

If you are unable to participate or uninterested in participating in a research study, you may write two 1-page critiques of the methods employed in two published research articles. First, locate two empirical articles that were not assigned for this course. Then, for
each study, you will write approximately half a page (double-spaced, 12pt font) describing aspects of the study procedure that you think the researchers could improve upon without sacrificing the scientific integrity of the study. Be sure to explain why this change is relevant to the authors’ conclusions and/or to how the authors expect the results will generalise to other individuals or other situations that were not directly tested. Lastly, on the remainder of the page, briefly describe a research question that builds on the current study but that is not fully addressed by the current study. In other words, given the results of the current study, what is the next question you would like the researchers to address? Briefly outline the new methods that the researchers could use to address this question. Hand in your critique to me in class on or before Tuesday, Mar 10th. Attach a copy of the first page of the empirical article (including the abstract).

You are welcome to combine these two options (i.e., participate in one 1-hr study and write a critique of one published study).

Late Policy
Thought papers that are submitted after the deadline (5pm the day before class) but before the start of class will have 0.5 points deducted from the score (e.g., if the paper earns 2 points, you will end up with 1.5 points for the late submission). Thought papers that are submitted after the start of class will be awarded 0 points.

Special Accommodations
1. Students with disabilities
   Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to see me privately as early as possible in the term. Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to me. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

2. Religious observances
   Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Academic Honour Principle
You are expected to familiarise yourself with and uphold all aspects of the Academic Honour Principle. See http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor for the official statement. You may not receive or provide assistance on any quiz or exam. Anything turned in with your name on it must be solely your own work, and submitted only for this class. Plagiarism is the submission or presentation of work, in any form, that is not your own, without acknowledgment of the source. You must cite all sources according to the formal APA guidelines. I take the Academic Honour Principle seriously and expect you to do the same.
Final Note on How to Excel in this Course

I want you to do well in this class. Therefore, there are multiple chances for assessment. Please use these opportunities as an incentive to keep up with the class material.

You are encouraged to engage in active reading of the assigned articles. The purpose of the lectures is to explain, demonstrate, and amplify the core content. There will be some overlap between the readings and the lectures, but there will be a substantial amount of material that is unique to each. Your understanding of each lecture will be best if you have done the assigned readings before each class. Also, come to class ready to discuss the readings, so that your classmates and I can gain from your insights. If you find yourself not understanding the assigned readings and lectures, please set up an appointment with me or drop by during my office hours.
# COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings are to be completed by the indicated class date. The schedule is subject to change. All articles are available through Canvas.

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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>Overview of the course; Introduction to the field</td>
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<td>Jan 7 (X)</td>
<td>How to read a scientific journal article? (optional)</td>
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<td>Jan 14 (X)</td>
<td>Watch documentary on Genie (Secret of the Wild Child)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Biological Bases of</td>
<td>1. Friederici, A.D. (2009). Pathways to language:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Watch docu-movie <em>Project Nim</em>, part 1</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Watch docu-movie <em>Project Nim</em>, part 2</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 10 Mid-term exam (during regular class time)</td>
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<td>Reading materials</td>
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<td>Mar 5</td>
<td>Review / Catch-up</td>
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<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM (during regular class time)</td>
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