Lehman College
Department of Speech – Language – Hearing Sciences

Course Title: SPV 221 (LNG 230) Language Acquisition *3 hours, 3 credits*.
Location: Speech and Theatre 202
Meeting Days: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Time: 9:10-12:40
Instructor: Michelle A. Johnson
Email: mjohnson2@gc.cuny.edu
johnson.michelle.anne@gmail.com
Office Hours: Immediately after class every day.

Textbook: **Pence Turnbull, Khara L., and Justice, Laura M. (2012).** Language development from theory to practice. 2nd Edition. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall. *The page numbers in the digital format of this book have been maintained.*
Please get the textbook as quickly as possible. It is available for rent in digital format from Amazon. The link is on the course website.
Website: http://spv221winter15.commons.gc.cuny.edu/
Supplemental materials will be available on the website.

Course Description:

How do children learn language?

Have you ever wondered how babies learn to talk, or how people learn language? Every healthy child learns the language(s) people speak around them; they learn this without instruction, without "perfect" input, and in some cases without even having speech directed *at* them. As far as we can tell, human beings are the only animals that have this remarkable ability. In this course, we will explore some of the theories of why this is so. This course will be guided by the following questions:

- How do typically developing children acquire language: when, and in what order do children develop syntax, phonology, morphology, and the lexicon?
- What factors contribute to language development and what theories do we have that can explain why some factors are necessary while others are not?

We will consider other topics in less detail: the relationship between language development and literacy, similarities and differences across languages and cultures, multilingual language development, life-long language development, and language disorders.

Objectives:

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Identify the stages of healthy childhood language acquisition from newborn to 4 years old
- Explain how and when children develop the major areas of language (i.e., phonology, syntax, morphology, semantics, and pragmatics).
- Describe the multiple dimensions that social interaction plays in language acquisition
- Perform a multidimensional language analysis to assess a child's linguistic skills
- Explain a significant component of childhood language development to non-specialist

Format

This course is largely project based with daily quizzes. Because of the condensed format, I expect that you will devote a significant amount of time to preparing for class every day. A regular class is 15 weeks long. This class is 15 days, so each day in the winter session is similar to one week in a regular session. If you find yourself falling behind or getting lost, ask for help immediately.

Assignments

Quizzes

Every day, you will take a quiz at the beginning of class. The primary purpose of this quiz is for me to know that you are keeping up with the material and the key areas that we have talked about. This quiz will be given at the beginning of class every day and will be a review of the previous day's material. The questions are the focus questions at the beginning of each chapter or similar to them. There will be 3 open-ended questions. You can earn 7 points per quiz: 1 point for writing your name on the paper, 1 point for each relevant answer, and 1 point for each correct answer. I will return your quiz to you at the end of class the next day. The lowest 2 quizzes will be dropped.

Project

For the project, you will create a visual or oral representation of one topic we have discussed in class or that is covered in the textbook. This can be a poster, a brochure, a website/blog page, an infographic, a public service announcement, a podcast, etc. I encourage you to be creative and have fun with this project. A more thorough rubric and description will be distributed separately.

Language Analysis

For the language analysis, you will complete an observation of a child between 18 and 48 months old. I have pre-selected 3 recordings you may choose from. You will write a paper[1] on this child's phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic skills. You must include the Mean Length Utterance (MLU) and explain what it indicates. You will give your overall impression of the child's language skills (normally developing, delayed, etc.), and justify your opinion with specific examples. A more thorough rubric and description will be distributed separately

Final Exam

The final exam is cumulative, and will be primarily short answer format. You will have the entire 3.5 hour block to complete the test. You may use your notes and the book. You may not use your phone or computer and you may not leave the room and then come back.

Responsibilities

Attendance

You are responsible to attend all meetings of class. Since this class will rely heavily on group discussion, it will be very difficult to develop your ideas about the topics without attending the lectures. There is no attendance policy, per se, since it is built into your quiz grade. However, if you must miss 2 or more sessions, please come see me immediately so you do not fall behind.

Turning in work

You do not have daily or weekly homework to turn in. You are therefore expected to start working on your project and your language assessment early.

Late Work

The penalty for late work is late feedback. If you give me a paper or a project late, I will grade it with the next week's set of materials. This will seriously hurt you in this course because you will not have time to reflect on and incorporate the feedback before the final exam.

Academic Integrity

Stand on the shoulders of giants.[2]

All students will uphold academic integrity and only engage in ethical intellectual conduct. This means students will not plagiarize, use fabricated data, present biased findings, or present opinions as fact.

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[1] 5-7 pages double-spaced, 12 point serif font (i.e., Times New Roman, Garamond, Bookman Old Style, Cambria, etc.), 1 inch margins, printed and stapled.

[2] This quote is currently Google Scholar's motto, but originally from Isaac Newton in a letter about his scientific discoveries "If I have seen far, it is because I am standing on the shoulders of giants" ("Standing on the shoulders of giants," 2013). It is also used in the free software movement, which is committed to the collaborative building of works by and for the people rather than ownership of our tools, efforts and creativity by corporations (Lessig, 2007). For more on this, visit http://www.ted.com/talks/larry_lessig_says_the_law_is_strangling_creativity.html

Plagiarism

1. Copying word for word someone else's work.
2. Paraphrasing someone else's ideas without giving credit to the original source (of the idea- not just the words).
   a. This includes sources taken from the internet. It is far better to cite webpages (including Wikipedia) and give credit where credit is due than to accidentally take someone else's idea or summary.
3. Not indicating which ideas are from someone else within the text. A list of sources at the end of a paper is not sufficient –readers cannot identify which ideas are the author's and which ideas are from another source.
4. Here: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/plagiarism/ is an excellent source for information about plagiarism. Here: http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/student-affairs/documents/student-handbook-02.pdf is Lehman's policy.

Technology

Students will utilize the course website to download supplemental materials. Course materials will not be hosted on blackboard.

For technology needs, students have access to the library, which has a multimedia lab where all of these materials can be listened to/watched. If you are having trouble with technology on campus, please call the Help Desk at 718-960-1111 or visit them in Carman Hall.

Technology in the Classroom

If you are using your phone, laptop, ipad, etc. to take notes, look up things relevant to the course, live tweet the class, etc., I encourage you to bring your device. If it might be a distraction, I leave it in your bag; there will be significant amounts of discussion that are critical to developing your ideas on the topics – so distractions are just that: a "drawing away of the mind," from Latin *distractionem* ("the definition of distraction," n.d.).

Rights

Disabilities

Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations must register with the Office of Student Disability Services. Once you have registered, please bring documentation from them for any assistance that you will need to help you succeed. Without documentation, I will not make accommodations. For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238; phone number, 718-960-8441.

Discrimination Policy

Lehman College does not discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, national origin, religion, handicap, or political belief, in any of its educational programs and activities, including employment practices and its policies relating to recruitment and admission of students.

Tutoring/Writing Center

The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) is one the tutoring centers on campus. The ACE provides appointment based and drop-in tutoring in the humanities, social sciences, and writing, as well as general writing and academic skills workshops. To obtain more information about the ACE and the SLC, please visit their website at http://www.lehman.edu/issp.

Grading

1. Quizzes: 25%
2. Project: 25%
3. Language Analysis: 25%
4. Final Exam: 25%

95-100%	A	83-86%	B	71-74%	C	60-65%	D
91-94%	A-	79-82%	B-	70-73%	C-	Below 60%	F
87-90%	B+	75-78%	C+	66-69%	D+		

Tentative Schedule of Topics - Overview

January	Topic	Reading/Due
2	Introductions/ Big Questions	
5	Major Approaches & Theories	Chapter 1 (recommended) Chapter 2 (40-66) Contents (xiii-xix)
6	Theory & Practice	Chapter 2 (67-71)
7	Building Blocks of Language (Phonology, Morphology & Syntax)	Chapter 3 (76-97)
8	Building Blocks of Language (Semantics & Pragmatics)	Chapter 3 (98-112) **PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE**
9	Overview of Developmental Stages, Overview of measurement	Chapter 5 (156-168, 183-190)
12	Infancy	Chapter 5 (168-182) **PROJECT DUE**
13	Finish Infancy	
14	Toddler	Chapter 6 (194-233)
15	Finish Toddler Begin Preschool	Chapter 7 (236-269) **LANGUAGE TRANSCRIPTION DUE**
16	Finish Preschool	
19	**MLK Day – No classes!**	
20	School-Age & Beyond	Chapter 8 **LANGUAGE ANALYSIS DUE**
21	Language Differences & Disorders	Chapter 9
22	Review	
23	Final Exam	