Linguistics & Languages
LINGUIST 3C03
Child Language Acquisition
Fall 2025

McMaster University

HUMANITIES

Instructor Information

Dr. Bre-Anna Owusu
Email: kingb10@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours:
Fridays 5–6 PM on Zoom
https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/4149884870

Course Information

Emails: Please include the course code (Ling/Psych 3C03) in the subject of all emails.

E-mail: lingdept@mcmaster.ca or pnb@mcmaster.ca (for administrative issues such as MSAFs)

Tutorials: N/a **Labs:** N/a

Lectures: One lecture per week

Course Dates: 09/02/2025 - 12/04/2025

Units: 3.00

Course Delivery Mode: Online

Course Description: Language behaviour and development in children, from birth to school age. The course examines how data from children's language acquisition can inform linguistic theory. Three hours; one term Prerequisite(s): LINGUIST 1A03; and one of LINGUIST 1AA3, PNB 2XA3 or PSYCH 2H03 Cross-list(s): PSYCH 3C03 This course is administered by the Department of Linguistics and Languages.

Meeting Details

Lectures will be posted on **Fridays before 3:00 PM** on Avenue to Learn. Lectures are asynchronous and may be viewed at any time.

Important Links

- [Mosaic](#)
- [Avenue to Learn](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations](#)
- [McMaster University Library](#)
- [eReserves](#)

Course Learning Outcomes

- Identify and summarize major milestones and typical developmental trajectories of language from birth to school age.

- Apply concepts from language development to analyze brief examples of child language data and answer theory-focused questions.

- Communicate empirical findings clearly and concisely to a scholarly audience via a focused 3-minute data blitz.
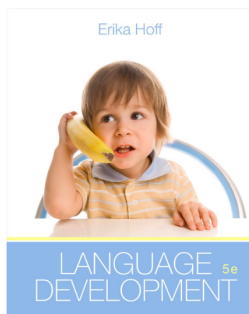
Course Learning Goals

- Identify and summarize major milestones and typical developmental trajectories of language from birth to school age.

- Apply core concepts from language development to analyze brief child-language data and draw theory-relevant conclusions.

- Communicate empirical findings clearly and persuasively to a scholarly audience via a focused 3-minute data blitz.

Required Materials and Texts

Please sign in with your MacID [here](#) to view your booklist

Language Development
ISBN: 9780357671122
Authors: Erika Hoff
Publisher: Cengage Learning
Publication Date: October 6th, 2020
Edition: 5th
The e-textbook (1-year access) contains the same content as the printed edition; students may purchase either format. Access to the e-text begins upon activation and lasts 12 months.

Class Format

Online

Course Evaluation

Assessment Overview & Weighting

Assessment Methods	Weight
Weekly Quizzes (11 x 2%; lowest quiz score dropped)	20%
Language Sample Analysis	10%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Data Blitz Presentation	10%
Final Exam	35%
Total	**100%**

Course Evaluation Details

Weekly Quizzes

Quizzes are designed to be completed in 15-minutes. The quizzes are designed to encourage you to keep up with textbook readings. Quizzes will be completed on A2L.These are **individual, closed-book, online quizzes**. You may **not** use online resources, your textbook, or discuss quizzes with anyone. Any violation of these rules constitutes an **academic offence** and will be dealt with **seriously** according to university policies.

3-Minute Data Blitz Presentation

You will select a peer-reviewed journal article on child language acquisition and present a 3-minute summary via a video recorded presentation. This assignment gives you practice in synthesizing research and communicating complex ideas concisely.

Your presentation should:

- Highlight the key research question and methods
- Summarize the main findings and data
- Explain the theoretical or developmental significance of the results

Mid-Term Exam

The midterm exam will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions and covers content from lectures and Chapters 1-6 of the textbook. You will have 90 minutes to complete the exam. The test will be written on A2L.This is an **individual, closed-book, online midterm**. You may **not** use online resources, your textbook, or discuss the midterm with anyone. Any violation of these rules constitutes an **academic offence** and will be dealt with **seriously** according to university policies.

Language Sample Analysis

You'll be assigned short child language audio/video clips to analyze. This assignment introduces and reinforces key concepts in language development and gives you hands-on, clinical-style experience similar to tasks performed by Speech-Language Pathologists. You'll transcribe, annotate, and quantify features of the children's speech, write a brief summary connecting your observations to developmental theories and propose a brief rehabilitative activity. This assignment is designed to support your understanding of child language acquisition and help you actively apply what you've learned.

Final Exam

The final exam will consist of 100 multiple-choice questions and covers content from the entire course. You will have 2 hours to complete the exam. The final exam will be written in person during the exam period that runs from December 6 – December 19.

Undergraduate Grading Scale

The grades breakdown for McMaster's 12-Point Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Course Schedule

Week-by-Week Guide: Readings, Notes & Due Dates

Week of	Chapter Reading	Notes	Assessment Due Dates
September 1	Chapter 1		
September 8	Chapter 2	Quiz 1	September 12
September 15	Chapter 3	Quiz 2	September 19
September 22	Chapter 4	Quiz 3	September 26
September 29	Chapter 5	Quiz 4 3-Minute Data Blitz Presentation	October 3 October 6
October 6	Chapter 6	Quiz 5	October 10

Week of	Chapter Reading	Notes	Assessment Due Dates
October 13		**Reading Week**	**N/a**
October 20		**Mid-term**	**October 24**
October 27	Chapter 7	Quiz 6	October 31
November 3	Chapter 8	Quiz 7	November 7
November 10	Chapter 9	Quiz 8	November 14
November 17	Chapter 10	Quiz 9 Language Sample Analysis	November 21 November 24
November 24	Chapter 11	Quiz 10	November 28
December 1		Quiz 11	December 5
December 6 - 19		**Final Exam**	**TBD (Scheduled by the Registrar)**

Late Assignments

A 10% deduction will be applied for each day an assignment is late, beginning immediately after 11:59 PM on the due date. This does not apply to quizzes. Please submit your work on time as meeting deadlines is an important life skill.

- **Quizzes:** No need to MSAF; lowest quiz is dropped. Quizzes submitted past deadline = **0**.
- **Midterm:** MSAF must go through your Faculty advising office; you cannot self-report.
- **Assignments (Data Blitz, Language Sample Analysis):** If more than 72 hours late = **0**.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

[McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)](#):

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

You do not need to submit an MSAF for a quiz, your lowest score will be dropped.

Students who miss the midterm must submit an MSAF-B to their faculty.

Course Modification

The syllabus is subject to change. All changes will be communicated through announcements on A2L.

Generative AI: Use Prohibited

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course to assist with any assignments or quizzes. In alignment with [McMaster academic integrity policy,](#) it "shall be an offence knowingly to … submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source". This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, "Contract Cheating is the act of "outsourcing of student work to third parties" (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment." Using

Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](), located at https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-proceduresguidelines/

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a

positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.](#)

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.