A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will study the normal acquisition of speech and language in infants, children, and adolescents. Speech and language development will be studied in relation to the development of cognitive, perceptual, motor, emotional, and social skills. Theories of language acquisition and methods of assessing language will be discussed. The emergence of literacy in relation to language development will also be addressed. In addition, lectures will focus on cultural and linguistic variation in language acquisition.

This is a hybrid course, which means that some instruction will be provided face-to-face in the classroom, whereas other instruction will be provided online via Blackboard and a course website (See section E, item 1). To successfully complete this course, students are required to participate in both face-to-face sessions, as well as in online asynchronous activities, as per the course schedule outlined below in section D.

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the five main components of language.
2. Describe current theories of language acquisition and their impact on our understanding of language development.
3. Describe the relationship between the development of language and the development of cognitive, perceptual, motor, emotional, and social skills.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the normal speech and language acquisition process in children.
5. Identify differences in language acquisition across individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
6. Demonstrate skills in language sample analysis and professional writing.

Assessment formats, which are face-to-face or online, as detailed below: Exams, discussion, language sample analysis assignments, paper and oral presentation.

C. COURSE TOPICS

I. Introduction to speech, language, & communication
   ● The differences among speech, language, and communication.
   ● Nonlinguistic, paralinguistic, and metalinguistic types of communication.
   ● The primary characteristics of language.
   ● Descriptions of the five domains of language.
   ● Dialectal variations and how dialects develop.

II. Theories of language
   ● Reasons for adopting theories of language.
   ● Contributions and limitations of Behavioral theory, Nativist theory, Psycholinguistic theories, Sociolinguistic theories, and Interactionist theories.
   ● Child language research - methods of data collection and analysis.

III. Neurological foundations of speech & language
   ● Basic functions of the human brain.
   ● Brain maturation and specialization.
   ● Areas of the brain responsible for language processing.
   ● Language comprehension and production processes.
   ● Information processing.
   ● Brain imaging methods used to study speech and language acquisition.

IV. Cognitive, perceptual, & motor foundations of speech & language
   ● The relationship between cognition and language skills.
   ● Development of sensation, perception, and motor control.
   ● Neonatal oral reflexes.
   ● Oral-motor development and stages of prelinguistic vocalization.
   ● Aspects of cognition related to language development.
   ● Genetic and environmental influences on cognitive development.

V. Social & communicative foundations of speech & language
   ● Communication with a newborn.
   ● The importance of infant-caregiver bonding.
   ● Development of gestures.
   ● The impact of maternal behavior on an infant’s development.
   ● Infant-caregiver interactions that influence the development of communication.
   ● Cultural, socioeconomic, and gender differences in infant development.
VI. Language learning in young children in relation to their environments
- Cognitive prerequisites for language learning.
- The relationship among cognition, comprehension, and production of language.
- Children’s learning strategies and parents’ teaching methods for language.
- Characteristics of child directed speech.
- Play as the context for language acquisition.

VII. Language acquisition from birth – age 3
- Characteristics of first words.
- Development of gestures.
- The intentions of early vocalizations and verbalizations.
- Early lexical development.
- Development of single-word utterances.
- Early concept development.
- Development of semantic categories.
- Development of multi-word combinations.
- Early phonological learning.

VIII. Pragmatic & semantic development in preschool children
- Development of conversational skills.
- Comprehension and production of intentions.
- Narrative development.
- Theory of Mind in relation to communicative abilities.
- Strategies for word learning.
- Factors that influence lexical development.
- Acquisition of relational terms.

IX. Language form development in preschool children
- Relationship between semantics and syntax.
- Stages of morphological development.
- Stages of syntactic development.
- Methods for calculating syntactic complexity.
- Phonological processes observed in preschool children.

X. Early school-age language development
- Narrative development.
- Expansion of conversational skills.
- Vocabulary growth.
- Morphologic development.
- Phrase and sentence development.
- Acquisition of metalinguistic skills.

XI. School-age literacy development
- Phases of reading development.
- Impact of phonological awareness on reading acquisition.
- Bottom-up and top-down processing in reading.
- Development of reading, writing, and spelling.
XII. Cultural & linguistic differences in language acquisition

- Cultural and linguistic variables that affect language development.
- Bilingualism in contrast to monolingualism.
- Communicative competence in bilinguals.

D. COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

F2F = face-to-face class sessions, online = asynchronous learning

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<th>CLASS FORMAT</th>
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<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<td>Introduction to speech, language, &amp; communication</td>
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<td>online</td>
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<td>6/6</td>
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<td>6/11</td>
<td>F2F</td>
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<td>6/12</td>
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<td>Social &amp; communicative foundations of speech &amp; language</td>
<td>Language Sample Analysis – Part II</td>
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<td>F2F</td>
<td>Language learning in young children in relation to their environments</td>
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<td>7/3</td>
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<td>School-age literacy development</td>
<td>Recorded Presentations Due</td>
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<td>7/4</td>
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<td>Independence Day - NO CLASS</td>
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<td>7/9</td>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Cultural &amp; linguistic differences in language acquisition</td>
<td>Language Sample Analysis Data Sheet Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>online</td>
<td>Review for Third Exam</td>
<td>Posts on Recorded Presentations Due</td>
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E. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Organization of the class & communication protocols:**
   F2F class sessions will be devoted to lecture, group work, and exams. Online learning will take place via Blackboard (hereafter, BB) ([https://bbhosted.cuny.edu/](https://bbhosted.cuny.edu/)). You will be receiving correspondence via the email address that is associated with your BB account. You should have received a welcoming email. If you have not yet received it, please log on to BB and under the menu, select Help > Update Email. To receive technical support with BB, you can access information in BB under Help in the menu. Alternatively, you may call the Brooklyn College Help desk at 718-951-4357.

   **Announcements** will be posted in BB to update students and to provide brief comments on class progress. New announcements will also be automatically emailed to students.

   The **Syllabus** link contains the syllabus, including the schedule of F2F class sessions vs. online learning, as well as the grading rubrics for this course.

   The **Course Materials** link contains content organized topically in folders. Additional resources are located on our course website, [http://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/spec2231epstein](http://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/spec2231epstein).

   Under **Assignments**, you will find details on each assignment with instructions on how to submit each one.

   Click on the **Discussion Board** link to access the discussion forums, which are related to the content under Course Materials, as well as to F2F lectures.

   Feel free to use the **Q & A Forum** for questions that are relevant to the entire class. You may email me with questions that are relevant to you specifically. Please include the course number as the subject in all email correspondence so that I can readily identify your email. I will attempt to reply to posts under the Q & A Forum and to emails within 1-2 business days.

   The **Resources** link includes a wealth of information on how to do collaborative work in BB, web resources for language sample analysis, and optional online readings, among other resources.

   Be sure to log on to BB frequently and to stay abreast of the due dates for assignments.

2. **Attendance and punctuality:** Students are expected to attend all F2F class sessions and to arrive promptly. If you cannot attend class, notify me within 24 hours before or after the class session by e-mail. Students are responsible for all work missed.
3. **Participation (10% of course grade):** Successful completion of this hybrid course is contingent on participation during F2F sessions and in online discussions. Each student is expected to contribute to F2F class sessions by raising questions and joining in class discussions. During each F2F class, students will be required to write a brief reflection on a relevant question which will be used as the basis for a grade on participation (Total = 3 points). Online participation is completed by posting to discussion forums on Blackboard. Beyond the *Getting to Know You* forum, there are 3 discussion topics. Students must respond to each of these 3 discussion topics for a total of 2 points for each discussion. In addition, students must post a reply to at least one classmate’s thread for each of the 3 discussions, amounting to 1% of the course grade. See the participation rubric provided on Blackboard under Assignments. Discussion threads and replies must be completed during the assigned week. No late credit will be given for discussion threads. Total participation credit possible comprises 10% of the course grade.

4. **Assignments:** Required readings and assignments must be completed by the due dates noted on Blackboard under Assignments. Students are responsible for submitting all assignments by the beginning of class on the designated dates for F2F class sessions and by 11:59 pm Eastern time for online submissions. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior permission from the instructor.

   - All assignments should be typed, proofread, and spell-checked before submission.
   - Written assignments should conform to the standards detailed in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.).
   - All written assignments must be submitted to the instructor via the Assignments link in Blackboard. Each assignment will be given a numerical grade based on content and writing.

5. **Self-Study Assignments (10% of course grade):** Online learning materials will be accompanied by a brief exercise that is intended as a self-study guide that tests the student’s knowledge of the material. These assignments must be submitted on BB and will be graded as either “pass” for submissions that are at least 80% correct or “fail” for those that are less than 80% correct. It is the student’s responsibility to verify that the responses are correct.

   All self-study assignments are due by the end of the week in which they are assigned.

6. **Language sample analysis activities (10% of course grade):** Students will be provided with language samples from normally developing children and will be required to transcribe and analyze the samples. These activities must be done in groups of two students. Students will be given the opportunity to identify a partner and initiate some of the assignments during F2F class sessions. Group work for these activities may be done in person or via the collaborative Blackboard tools described under the *Resources* link. Details on the assignments can be found on Blackboard under the *Assignments* link > Language Sample Analysis. Due dates for these assignments will be announced in class and will be posted to Blackboard. Both members of each pair will receive the same grade regardless of individual input.
Journal article review and oral presentation:

Step 1 (15% of course grade):
Select one scholarly journal article on any topic related to research on normal development of language. Articles that address language disorders are not acceptable. The article should have a publication date within the past 10 years. Send the instructor the reference for the article in the text of an e-mail with the article as an attachment by the due date on the course schedule. The title of the e-mail should be 2231 Article Reference. Students will be sent an e-mail informing them whether or not the article has been approved.

Journal article review:
Based on class discussions, required readings, and other scholarly sources of your choice (e.g., journal articles, see list of recommended texts), write a review that includes the following components:

- The research problem addressed in the study
- A brief description and analysis of the methodology
- A brief description of the results
- A brief description of the conclusions
- A discussion of the clinical and/or theoretical implications of the study
- Strengths and limitations of the study

Formatting guidelines:

- The paper should be typed using a 12-point font, double-spaced, with a header on all pages according to APA style. Do not exceed 3 pages.
- Provide the citation of the article at the top of your review using APA format.
- Include an introduction and a conclusion.
- Submit the paper as a Microsoft Word document to the instructor via the Assignments link in Blackboard by the due date stated on the course schedule. The title of the attachment should be the student’s last name, followed by ARTICLE REVIEW, exactly as follows: e.g., Jones_ARTICLE REVIEW.

Submissions that do not adhere to these precise instructions may be rejected.

Step 2 (5% of course grade):
Record with audio or audio+video a 5-7 minute oral presentation on your article review. All components of the paper outlined above should be addressed. You may incorporate use of Microsoft PowerPoint and/or visual aids for your presentation, but this is not necessary. Upload the recording along with the written paper via the Assignments link in Blackboard.

Step 3 (2% of course grade):
Peer Review - Review and comment on a classmate’s recording. Select any classmate’s audio/audio+video recording. Review the recording and respond to the following questions via the Assignments link titled Journal Article Reviews. Enter your text into the textbox and number each of your responses. The title of your submission should include a few words from the title of the research article that was reviewed.

1. Describe the research question addressed in the article review.
2. Describe one method used to investigate this research question.
3. Identify one strength or limitation of the student’s review of the research article.

The paper and presentation will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Inclusion of all components listed above
- Accuracy and relevance of information
- Organization and clarity of written and oral presentation
- Oral communication skills and creativity

The peer review of a student’s recording will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Accuracy of information for questions 1 and 2
- Appropriateness of the written post - i.e., collegiality, spelling and grammar, etc.

8. **Evaluation Criteria:**
   - Participation based on in-class reflections 5%
   - Self-Study Assignments 10%
   - Language sample analysis assignments 10%
   - Journal article review -
     - Written paper 10%
     - Recorded presentation 4%
     - Peer review 1%
   - First exam 20%
   - Second exam 20%
   - Third exam 20%

   *Students who lose points for participation due to lateness or absence will not be provided with opportunities to make up the lost points.*

Grades will be posted to Blackboard under My Grades, which can be accessed in the course’s site through the menu link Tools > My Grades or on the Home page in the upper left Tools module > My Grades. An exclamation mark will appear after an assignment is submitted, which means that the work has been submitted but not yet graded.

9. **Grading Scale:**
   - A+ = 100, A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 74-76, C- = 70-73, D+ = 67-69, D = 64-66, D- = 60-63, F = 59 & below

   There will be no extra-credit assignments accepted for this course.

10. **Academic Integrity:** The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. These offenses are punishable by penalties such as failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: [http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies). If a faculty member suspects a violation of
academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

11. **Disability-related academic accommodations:**
   To receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. Students who have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services should provide the instructor with the course accommodation form and discuss the specific accommodation(s) with the instructor.

12. **Non-attendance because of religious beliefs:** Refer to the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs in the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin on p. 66.

**F. RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Additional readings and resources are available on Blackboard under the Resources link.


This syllabus may be revised at the discretion of the instructor. Changes, if necessary, will be announced in class and posted to Blackboard.