The Acquisition of English as a Second Language: Sentence and Word Order

2014/2015

Code: 42299
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313157 Estudis Anglesos Avançats / Advanced English Studies	OT	0	0

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Use of languages

Principal working language: anglès (eng)

Some groups entirely in English: No

Some groups entirely in Catalan: Yes

Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Prerequisites

This subject studies language and its acquistion and, therefore, the minimum requirements are:

a) interest in both of these languages

b) a good level of English to be able to read, understand and produce texts about language and its acquisition

c) a basic knowledge of syntax*

* For those students who lack this knowledge, basic readings are available.

Please contact me if this is your case before the course begins.

Objectives and Contextualisation

This course studies how the syntax of English is acquired by non-native learners. We begin with a review of the order of elements in English sentences and compare this to word orders in other languages with the objective of considering if and how a native language may influence the process of acquiring a second language. We note the differences between L1 and L2 acquisition but concentrate on L2 acquisition, a process not fully determined by the native speaker's innate endowment. The course includes a practical component of analysis of errors in L2 production.

Skills

- Analyse and synthesise information at an advanced level.
- Analyse the relationship between factors, processes or phenomena in the acquisition of English as a second language, its learning and teaching methods, and its literature, history and culture.
- Apply methodological knowledge of statistical analysis and data generation, treatment and codification of multilingual databases, analysis of literary texts, etc. to research.
- Communicate the knowledge acquired and the contributions of ones research correctly, accurately and clearly both orally and in writing.
- Critically argue, issue judgements and present ideas on the basis of the analysis of information originating from scientific production in these areas.
- Develop autonomous learning skills applicable to the research process.

- Distinguish and contrast between the different methodological and theoretical models applied to the academic study of the acquisition, teaching and use of English as a second language in multilingual and multicultural contexts, literary studies and cultural studies.
- Show respect towards the opinions, values, behaviours and/or practices of others.
- Use the English language for academic and professional purposes related to research into the acquisition, teaching and use of English as a second language in multilingual and multicultural contexts, literary studies and cultural studies.

Learning outcomes

1. Analyse and synthesise information at an advanced level.
2. Analyse different proposals regarding the acquisition of syntax.
3. Apply methodological knowledge of statistical analysis and data generation, treatment and codification of multilingual databases, analysis of literary texts, etc. to research.
4. Communicate the knowledge acquired and the contributions of ones research correctly, accurately and clearly both orally and in writing.
5. Critically read academic articles on the acquisition of language from a generativist point of view.
6. Develop autonomous learning skills applicable to the research process.
7. Explain the evolution of the syntax of learners of a second language
8. Show respect towards the opinions, values, behaviours and/or practices of others.
9. Write advanced level academic texts on the acquisition of language from a generativist point of view.

Content

1. The internal perspective. Acquiring a language as a process of grammar growth.

2. Delimiting grammar. Linguistic facts: word order and morphology.

3. L1: The acquisition of a native language. Characteristics of the process.

4. L2: The acquisition of a second language. Characteristics of the process.

5. Error analysis. Practical component.

The student will have to collect L2 data and provide an analysis of errors.

Bibliography

*Specific references for each topic will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Crain, S. & D. Lillo-Martin (1999) An Introduction to Linguistic Theory and Language Acquistion, Oxford: Backwell.

Gass, S.M. & J. Schachter (1989) Linguistic Perspectives on Second Language Acquistion, Cambridge: C. U. P.

Gass, S. & A. Mackey (2011) Data Elicitation for Second and Foreign Language Research, New York: Routledge.

Guasti, M.T. (2002) Language Acquisition. The Growth of Grammar, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Liceras, J.M. (2010) "Second Language Acquistion and Syntatic Theory in the 21st Century", in Annual Review of Applied Linguistics 30, pp. 248-269.

Haegeman, L. (1991) Introduction to Government and Binding Theory, Oxford: Blackwell.

Hawkins, R. (2001) Second Language Syntax. A Generative Introduction, Oxford: Blackwell.

Llinàs M., M. Capdevila, J. Dominguez, M. Moyer, E. Pladevall & S. Tubau (2014) Basic concepts for the analysis of English sentences. Bellaterra: Servei de Publicacions.

Radford, A., M. Atkinson, D. Britain, H. Clahsen & A. Spencer (1999) Linguistics. An Introduction, Cambridge: C. U. P.

Radford, A. (2009) Minimalist Syntax. Exploring the Structure of English, Cambridge: C.U.P.

Tallerman, M. (1998) Understanding Syntax, London: Arnold.