

## Language Acquisition

Code: 100196  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2024/2025**

Degree	Type	Year
2503998 Catalan Philology: Literary Studies and Linguistics	OT	4
2504211 Spanish Language and Literature	OT	3
2504211 Spanish Language and Literature	OT	4
2504212 English Studies	OT	3
2504212 English Studies	OT	4
2504380 English and Catalan Studies	OT	3
2504380 English and Catalan Studies	OT	4
2504386 English and Spanish Studies	OT	3
2504386 English and Spanish Studies	OT	4
2504388 Catalan and Spanish Studies	OT	3
2504388 Catalan and Spanish Studies	OT	4
2504393 English and French Studies	OT	0
2504393 English and French Studies	OT	3
2504393 English and French Studies	OT	4
2504394 English and Classics Studies	OT	3
2504394 English and Classics Studies	OT	4

## Contact

Name: Anna Gavarro Alguero

Email: [anna.gavarro@uab.cat](mailto:anna.gavarro@uab.cat)

## Teachers

Elena Pagliarini

## Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

## Prerequisites

A background in linguistics and knowledge of English to read the literature are necessary to follow the course.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

L'objectiu d'aquesta assignatura és d'introduir l'estudiant en un camp empíric de la lingüística: l'adquisició del llenguatge. Considerarem tant l'adquisició del llenguatge en els casos de desenvolupament típic com en el cas de la patologia. Al final del curs, l'alumne ha de ser capaç d'emprendre una recerca original en el camp.

## Competences

### Catalan Philology: Literary Studies and Linguistics

- Critically apply the different instruments of analysis to different types of linguistic data.
- Demonstrate a mastery of the rules of the Catalan language, its linguistic bases and all its application in the academic and professional fields.
- Identify the foundations of human language and the principles, methods and results of structural analysis of languages.
- Produce written work and oral presentations that are effective and framed in the appropriate register.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

### Spanish Language and Literature

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Demonstrate the ability to work autonomously and in teams in order to achieve the planned objectives in multicultural and interdisciplinary contexts.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Typologically identify the main phenomena of the Spanish language and relate them to similar phenomena in other languages.

### English Studies

- Develop arguments applicable to the fields of literature, culture and linguistics and evaluate their academic relevance.
- Distinguish and contrast the distinct paradigms and methodologies applied to the study of English.
- Produce effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in distinct languages (except English).
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

### English and Catalan Studies

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Critically apply the different instruments of analysis to different types of linguistic data.
- Identify the foundations of human language and the principles, methods and results of structural analysis of languages.

- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

#### English and Spanish Studies

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Identify the foundations of human language and the principles, methods and results of structural analysis of languages.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

#### Catalan and Spanish Studies

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Critically apply different analytical instruments to different types of linguistic data, whether in synchronic or diachronic.
- Identify the foundations of human language and the principles, methods and results of structural analysis of languages.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

#### English and French Studies

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Identify the foundations of human language and the principles, methods and results of structural analysis of languages.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

#### English and Classics Studies

- Identify the foundations of human language, the principles, methods and results of the structural analysis of languages.
- Produce effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in distinct languages.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately drawing up normative texts.
2. Appropriately use the different available formal and technical resources.
3. Construct normatively correct texts.

4. Identify different theoretical options or ways of approaching the same problems from alternative theoretical frameworks.
5. Identify different theoretical options or ways to address the same problems from alternative theoretical frameworks.
6. Identify main and secondary ideas and express them with linguistic correctness.
7. Identify principal and secondary ideas and express them using correct language.
8. Identify the main and secondary ideas and express them with linguistic correctness.
9. Identifying different theoretical options or ways of dealing with the same problem from alternative theoretical frameworks.
10. Identifying main and supporting ideas and expressing them with linguistic correctness.
11. Identifying the main and secondary ideas and expressing them with linguistic correctness.
12. Produce normatively correct written and oral texts.
13. Recognise different systems of natural language processing on the basis of their possible applications and development principles.
14. Recognising different processing systems of the natural language according to their possible applications and development principles.
15. Resolving problems independently.
16. Solve problems autonomously.
17. Solve problems self-sufficiently.
18. Solving problems autonomously.
19. Use and interpret texts of an interdisciplinary nature on the connections between linguistics and other disciplines.
20. Use and interpret texts of interdisciplinary nature about the connections between linguistics and other disciplines.

## Content

1. Introduction. Language as a defining characteristic of the species. Plato's problem. An extreme case of poverty of stimulus: creoles.
2. The acquisition of morphosyntax in typically developing children
  - 2.1. General features of language acquisition.
  - 2.2. First syntactic productions.
  - 2.3. Phenomena of apparent optionality: optional infinitives and optional production of third person clitics. A note on DLD.
  - 2.4. The acquisition of syntax. Passives. Related structures.
3. The acquisition of the lexicon
  - 3.1. Phonological bootstrapping
  - 3.2. The acquisition of meaning: Nouns vs. Verbs
  - 3.3. Biases in lexical learning.
4. The acquisition of logical words and pragmatics
  - 4.1. Implicatures
  - 4.2. Quantifiers

## Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Discussion of the literature	45	1.8	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Master lectures	10	0.4	2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 19, 20
Type: Supervised			
Problem resolution and preparation of written work	43.5	1.74	1, 3, 4, 15, 16, 17, 18
Type: Autonomous			
Reading	30	1.2	2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 19, 20

The methodology used will be based on problem resolution.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Assessment

### Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Original analysis	25%	10	0.4	2, 5, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20
Written essay	25%	10	0.4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20
Written exercise	50%	1.5	0.06	4, 5, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18

The evaluation will consist in three items: (i) a written exercise, (ii) an original piece of research, and (iii) a written exam at the end of the course.

Items (ii) and (iii) are a prerequisite to be reevaluated. Neither (i) nor (ii) will be subject to reevaluation. Furthermore, and following the faculty's policy, to be reevaluated the final mark should be between 3.5 and 4.9, and the mark obtained after reevaluation cannot be higher than 5. The lecturer will inform the students of the terms and time of revision. Plagiarism and copying in an exam will imply a zero of the item under evaluation; several irregularities of this kind will imply a zero for the whole course. Students will be 'No Avaluables' if they have not been evaluated for items (ii) and (iii).

Non continuous evaluation - Non-continuous evaluation will consist in the same three items of the continous evaluation, only following a calendar that will be published in due time.

## Bibliography

- Aravind, A., De Villiers, J., de Villiers, P. A., Lonigan, C. J., Phillips, B. M., Clancy, J., ... & Valiente, C. (2017). Children's quantification with every over time. *Glossa*, 10(X), 1.
- Arosio, F., Pagliarini, E., Perugini, M., Barbieri, L., & Guasti, M. T. (2016). Morphosyntax and logical abilities in Italian poor readers: The problem of SLI under-identification. *First Language*, 36(3), 295-315.
- Arosio, F., Foppolo, F., Pagliarini, E., Perugini, M., & Guasti, M. T. (2017). Semantic and pragmatic abilities can be spared in Italian children with SLI. *Language Learning and Development*, 13(4), 418-429.
- Bergelson, E., & Swingley, D. (2012). At 6-9 months, human infants know the meanings of many common nouns. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109(9), 3253-3258.
- Gavarró, Anna, Maya Leela, Luigi Rizzi & Julie Franck (2015). Knowledge of the OV parameter setting at 19months: Evidence from Hindi-Urdu. *Lingua*, 154: 27-34.
- Gavarró, Anna, Vicenç Torrens & Ken Wexler (2010) Object clitic omission: two language types. *Language Acquisition* 17(4): 192-219.
- Gervain, J., Nespore, M., Mazuka, R., Horie, R., & Mehler, J. (2008). Bootstrapping word order in prelexical infants: A Japanese - Italian cross-linguistic study. *Cognitive Psychology*, 57, 56-74.
- Guasti, M. Teresa (2017). *Language Acquisition. The Growth of Grammar*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press. Second edition.
- Halberda, J. (2003). The development of a word-learning strategy. *Cognition*, 87(1).
- Levi, Yonata & Jeannette Schaeffer (eds.) (2002). *Language Competence Across Populations*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Noveck, I. A. (2001). When children are more logical than adults: Experimental investigations of scalar implicature. *Cognition*, 78(2), 165-188.
- Skordos, D., Myers, A., & Barner, D. (2022). Quantifier spreading and the question under discussion. *Cognition*, 226, 105059.
- Stiller, A. J., Goodman, N. D., & Frank, M. C. (2015). Ad-hoc implicature in preschool children. *Language learning and development*, 11(2), 176-190.
- De Villiers, Jill, & Tom Roeper (eds.) (2011). *Handbook of Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition*. Berlin: Springer.

## Software

Child Language Data Exchange System <http://childes.psy.cmu.edu>

## Language list

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed