

**HNRS 190 Freshman Honors Tutorial**  
*Out of the Mouths of Babes*  
Fall 2009 Syllabus

Class Meetings: Monday 1:00-1:50; Dole 3048  
Class Instructor: Holly L. Storkel; [hstorkel@ku.edu](mailto:hstorkel@ku.edu); 864-0497  
Office Hours: By appointment

**Pre-/Co-requisites**

None.

**Course Description**

Children have an amazing ability to learn language. By 8-10 months, the baby's babbling approximates the adult speech sounds of the native language. By 12 months, infants produce their first word. From this entree into word learning, vocabulary growth rapidly accelerates from learning 1-2 words per day in infants and toddlers to learning 3-4 words per day in preschool children to learning 6-12 words per day in school-age children. In this tutorial, we will examine how infants and young children are able to rapidly learn and accurately store the sounds and words of their native language. Typical research methods used to investigate language acquisition will be highlighted through reading and critiquing research articles. Students will have an opportunity to explore other aspects of child development and language acquisition (e.g., cognitive development, social development, grammar acquisition, impaired language acquisition) through individual papers/presentations.

**Course Objectives**

During this course, students will:

1. Learn how to identify relevant research articles, gain access to the article using the KU Library system, and understand and evaluate the article;
2. Be exposed to a variety of research methods used in the study of language acquisition across the lifespan in both typically developing and language impaired populations;
3. Gain an appreciation for the complexity of child language acquisition by sampling an array of linguistic and cognitive skills that children must acquire and apply to learning their native language.

**Course Materials**

*Required Readings:*

1. Required readings for each class meeting are listed on the course calendar at the end of this syllabus. For all of the readings, students will be responsible for obtaining the readings using the KU Library resources. One class session, **August 31**, will be devoted to a library orientation specific to this course. Attendance at the library orientation session is **mandatory**.

*On-line Resources:*

1. Blackboard course website at <http://courseware.ku.edu>

## Requirements

### 1. *Readings & Discussion Board Posts (90 points; ~24% of final grade)*

Readings are assigned for most class periods. In some cases, multiple readings are assigned. In these instances, each student will only read ONE of the assigned readings, creating groups of 3-4 students reading the same article. Article assignments will be determined prior to class. It is essential that each student have a basic understanding of his or her assigned reading prior to attending class. To ensure this, students are required to post answers to basic questions about the assigned article on a discussion board on blackboard. The discussion board questions will help you extract the relevant features of the reading and will follow a standard format that will be introduced in class on **September 14**. Discussion board posts must be completed by **8:00 am** on the day the readings are assigned. Pre-class individual postings for each article will be worth 10 points and will be graded leniently (i.e., credit/no credit). During class, readings will be discussed in a large group on days where only one reading is assigned. On days where multiple readings are assigned, students will break-up into small groups based on the article read. The small groups will discuss the article and arrive at a consensus answer for each question about the article. Small groups will then present their article on roundtable discussion days (see #2 below). *There will be no opportunity to make-up or postpone pre-class individual postings.*

### 2. *Group Roundtable Discussions (30 points; ~8% of final grade)*

There will be **three** roundtable discussion days. These will occur after class sessions with multiple article assignments. Each group will present their assigned article to the class following a standard format. Each group will have approximately 5 minutes to present the highlights of their article. Groups should be prepared to answer questions from fellow students. Group presentations will be worth 10 points. Each member of the group will earn the same grade, unless the instructor notes variability in performance across the group. *In the event that you miss a roundtable discussion class, you may submit a written summary of your article for partial credit (maximum of 7 points).*

### 3. *Supplemental Reading Summaries (100 points; ~27% of final grade)*

Twice during the semester, students will find another research article similar to the topics discussed in class. Students will submit a pdf of the article along with an accompanying summary and critique paper via the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard. The summary and critique paper should summarize the article addressing the 10 key points used in all discussion board posts, describe the strengths and weaknesses of the article, and offer a reflection on the meaning of the article for child language acquisition/disorders as well as ideas for future research questions. These papers will be due at the beginning of class on **November 2** and **November 30**. It is intended that these papers will allow you to explore a topic of your interest in greater detail. Additional instructions will be provided on blackboard. Each summary will be worth 50 points. *There will be no opportunity to make-up or postpone supplemental reading summaries!*

### 4. *Final Paper and Individual Roundtable Discussion (125 points; ~34% of final grade)*

Students will write a short paper on a topic related to child language acquisition/disorders. Students must have at least **five** references that are research articles. The references can **not** be a reading from class or one of the student's supplemental readings. If class readings or the student's supplemental readings are relevant to the paper topic, they should be included but they do not count toward the five required references. The paper will require the student to summarize several findings on a particular topic, identify questions that still remain to be answered on that topic (either because of weaknesses in the existing research or because the critical studies have not been completed yet), and discuss why those remaining questions are important to answer. In addition, students will briefly present their topic at a roundtable discussion that will occur during the final exam time: **Wednesday, December 16, 10:30-1:00**. Final papers must be turned in via the Digital Dropbox on Blackboard prior to the roundtable discussion. Additional instructions will be provided on blackboard. The paper will be worth 100 points and the presentation at the roundtable discussion will be

worth 25 points. *There will be no opportunity to make-up or postpone final papers and roundtable discussion!*

5. *Co-Curricular Activities (25 points; ~7% of final grade)*

Students are expected to attend the Annual Honors Tutorial Symposium on **November 18, 6-8 pm, Nunemaker Center**. Here is some information about the symposium from Mark Nesbitt-Daly: “*The Symposium is an opportunity for you and your tutorial students share with others the new ideas with which you have grappled over the semester with some nice refreshments. In essence, it is a cordial academic social gathering. We will have two stages of presentations – one for individual or small-group posters and informal talks, and the second where each tutorial section has 3 brief minutes at the podium. To keep things from becoming too formal at the podium, we will leave it up to each tutorial to decide on its method of presentation. Some may decide to offer a few brief student testimonials, and a few groups will perform a very short skit related to their class!*” We will discuss our class’ contribution to the symposium during class time. However, I would suggest that the class consider a small outside activity to gain a better understanding of the challenges of child research. Specifically, the class might attempt to implement one of the methods we read about in class with an actual child. I’d be happy to make my 3-year-old son available for this type of exercise. We could then video tape a few snippets of the exercise and present a few clips at the symposium to entertain the other tutorials. This is merely a suggestion. Please feel free to either expand on this idea or offer an alternative. Grades will be based on participation.

**Audio or Video Taping Lecture**

Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

**Studying**

Significant learning may start in the classroom but it should continue to grow outside the classroom when students become actively engaged with the material. In this course, you will be actively engaged with the material outside of class through completion of readings, take-home exams, lab exercises, and quizzes. As stated in the Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations (5.1.1) “One semester hour means course work normally represented by an hour of class instruction and two hours of study a week for one semester, or an equivalent amount of work. The concept may vary according to the level at which instruction is offered.”

**Written Assignments**

Papers will entail a written response to specific questions. If you need assistance communicating your interpretations in written form, you may wish to consult the KU Writing Center (4017 Wescoe). The following statement from the writing center details the type of assistance available to students.

“Most colleges and universities have a writing center, a place for students to talk about their writing with trained peer consultants. At KU, we call our student writing centers Writer’s Roosts. When you visit, bring your work in progress and an idea of what you would like to work on – organization, support, documentation, editing, etc. The Roosts are open in several different locations across campus; check the website at [www.writing.ku.edu](http://www.writing.ku.edu) for current locations and hours. The Roosts welcome both drop-ins and appointments, and there is no charge for their services. For more information, please call 864-2399 or send an e-mail to [writing@ku.edu](mailto:writing@ku.edu).”

### **Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to observe all University guidelines pertaining to academic misconduct. As stated in the University Senate Rules and Regulations (2.6.1):

“Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another’s work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.” Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with all University rules and regulations.

### **Non-Academic Misconduct**

The scope and content of the material included in this course are defined by the instructor in consultation with the responsible academic unit. While the orderly exchange of ideas, including questions and discussions prompted by lectures, discussion sessions and laboratories, is viewed as a normal part of the educational environment, the instructor has the right to limit the scope and duration of these interactions. Students who engage in disruptive behavior, including persistent refusal to observe boundaries defined by the instructor regarding inappropriate talking, discussions, and questions in the classroom or laboratory may be subject to discipline for non-academic misconduct for disruption of teaching or academic misconduct, as defined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR), Article 22, Section C, and the University Senate Rules and Regulations, Section 2.4.6. Article 22 of CSRR also defines potential sanctions for these types of infractions.

### **Accommodations**

The staff of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), 135 Strong, 785-864-2620 (v/tty), coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted them, please do so as soon as possible. Please also notify the instructor in writing (e-mail is acceptable) within one week of receiving this syllabus so that appropriate accommodations for this course can be discussed.

If a scheduled exam, lab exercise, or quiz is in conflict with a mandated religious observance, you must notify the instructor in writing (e-mail is acceptable) within one week of receiving this syllabus so that an alternative arrangement can be made in advance of the scheduled requirement.

### **Pandemics** (From the Provost’s Office)

This may be an unusual year as we confront the H1N1 flu, which is expected to affect faculty, staff, and students this fall. Please familiarize yourself with information about the H1N1 flu, keep abreast of information about preventive measures and vaccines, and stay informed. KU will regularly update information about the H1N1 flu at <http://www.alerts.ku.edu/>. You can find additional information about the KU Pandemic Response Plan at <http://www.pandemic.ku.edu/> and the “Personal Guide to Protect Against Flu” at <http://www.pandemic.ku.edu/pdf/tipSheet.pdf>. Please contact the instructor and GTA immediately via e-mail and/or phone prior to class/assignment deadlines if you are ill. Depending on the situation, you will be advised of appropriate procedures to follow regarding class attendance, assignments, or exams. Please be considerate and take precautions to avoid infecting others!

### **Grading**

The University has prescribed definitions for grades. The University Senate Rules and Regulations define grades in the following way:

The grade of A will be reported for achievement of outstanding quality

The grade of B will be reported for achievement of high quality

The grade of C will be reported for achievement of acceptable quality

The grade of D will be reported for achievement that is minimally passing but at less than acceptable quality

In this course, quality of achievement will be evaluated through points earned on reading quizzes, supplemental reading summaries, and final paper/discussion. Points assigned for each requirement will be in-line with the above described scale. The relationship between total points accumulated and quality of achievement is as follows:

Total Course Points	Quality of Achievement	Final Letter Grade
332-370	Outstanding	A
295-331	High	B
258-294	Acceptable	C
221-257	Minimal	D
<221	Inadequate	F

Summary Points	Quality of Achievement	Letter Grade
45-50	Outstanding	A
40-44	High	B
35-39	Acceptable	C
30-34	Minimal	D
<30	Inadequate	F

If your level of achievement during this course is falling short of your goal, you are strongly encouraged to consult with the instructor to improve the quality of your learning of course material.

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Fall 2009 Calendar

**Research & Topic Overview**

- August 24 Introduction & Overview
- August 31 Finding Research with Judith Emde, KU Libraries  
\*\*\*Meet at the Anschutz Library Instruction Center (past the service desk at the main entrance on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)\*\*\*
- September 7 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY
- September 14 Evaluating Research  
Bring (Storkel, Armbruster, & Hogan, 2006) for in-class example

**Influence of Sounds on Word Learning**

- September 21 Initial Finding: Infants have difficulty learning similar sounding words (Stager & Werker, 1997)  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***
- September 28 Follow-up Research: ***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***
1. What predicts this difficulty, age or vocabulary? (Werker, Fennell, Corcoran, & Stager, 2002, Exp 3)
  2. Does this difficulty occur when learning 1 new word that sounds similar to an already learned word? (Swingley & Aslin, 2007, Exp 1)
  3. Is there anything that can be done to improve learning?
    - a. Strengthen knowledge of sounds? (Thiessen, 2007)
    - b. Increase acoustic variability? (Rost & McMurray, 2009)
- October 5 Follow-up Research Roundtable Discussion
- October 12 Children with Phonological Disorders (Storkel, Maekawa, & Hoover, Submitted)\*  
Discussion of Honors Tutorial Symposium Presentation, Part 1  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***

FALL BREAK

**Influence of Meaning on Word Learning**

- October 19 Initial Finding: Infants acquire a shape bias (Landau, Smith, & Jones, 1988, Exp 1)\*  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***
- October 26 Follow-up Research: ***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***
1. When does the shape bias emerge?
    - a. Cross-sectional evidence (Samuelson & Smith, 1999, Exp 2)
    - b. Longitudinal evidence (Gershkoff-Stowe & Smith, 2004)
  2. Can a precocious shape bias be trained? (Smith, Jones, Landau, Gershkoff-Stowe, & Samuelson, 2002, Exp 1)
  3. What is the “best” training to induce a shape bias? (Samuelson & Horst, 2007)

November 2 Follow-up Research Roundtable Discussion  
***Supplemental Reading Summary 1 due by 1:00 (i.e., class time)***

November 9 Late Talking Children (Jones, 2003)  
Discussion of Honors Tutorial Symposium Presentation, Part 2  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***

### **Influence of Social Understanding on Word Learning**

November 16 Initial Finding: Children use speaker's eye gaze to determine the referent of a word (Baldwin, 1993)  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***

***November 18 Annual Honors Tutorial Symposium, 6-8 pm, Nunemaker Center (attendance expected)***

November 23 Follow-up Research: ***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***

1. Are children sensitive to speaker's knowledge? (Sabbagh & Baldwin, 2001, Exp 1)
2. Are children sensitive to speaker's certainty? (Sabbagh & Baldwin, 2001, Exp 2)
3. Are children sensitive to speaker's past credibility? (Birch, Vauthier, & Bloom, 2008)
4. Does this social understanding vary by culture? (Liu, Wellman, Tardif, & Sabbagh, 2008)
5. What is the neural basis for social understanding? (Liu, Sabbagh, Gehring, & Wellman, 2009)

### THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 30 Follow-up Research Roundtable Discussion  
***Supplemental Reading Summary 2 due by 1:00 (i.e., class time)***

December 7 Children with Autism (Baron-Cohen, Baldwin, & Crowson, 1997)  
***Discussion Board Post (due by 8:00 am)***

***December 16 Final Paper & Roundtable Discussion (individual students), 10:30-1:00;***

All articles are available electronically through the library, EXCEPT those noted by a \* (which are available on Blackboard). For articles available from the library (i.e., those without a \*), you will need to find and download the article on your own. Go to the E-Journals section of the KU Library webpage, search for the journal, find the correct article, and download or print the article. We will review these procedures during our in-class library orientation.

All papers, assignments, and discussion boards will be submitted on Blackboard. If for any reason you have difficulty using Blackboard, you may e-mail your assignment to the instructor ([hstorkel@ku.edu](mailto:hstorkel@ku.edu)). All assignments must be received by the stated deadline, regardless of submission method (i.e., Blackboard or e-mail), to earn full credit.

## Readings

- Baldwin, D. A. (1993). Infants' ability to consult the speaker for clues to word reference. *Journal of Child Language, 20* (2), 395-418.
- Baron-Cohen, S., Baldwin, D. A., & Crowson, M. (1997). Do children with autism use the speaker's direction of gaze strategy to crack the code of language? *Child Development, 68* (1), 48-57.
- Birch, S. A. J., Vauthier, S. A., & Bloom, P. (2008). Three- and four-year-olds spontaneously use others' past performance to guide their learning. *Cognition, 107* (3), 1018-1034.
- Gershkoff-Stowe, L., & Smith, L. B. (2004). Shape and the First Hundred Nouns. *Child Development, 75* (4), 1098-1114.
- Jones, S. S. (2003). Late talkers show no shape bias in a novel name extension task. *Developmental Science, 6* (5), 477-483.
- Landau, B., Smith, L. B., & Jones, S. S. (1988). The importance of shape in early lexical learning. *Cognitive Development, 3* (3), 299-321.
- Liu, D., Sabbagh, M. A., Gehring, W. J., & Wellman, H. M. (2009). Neural correlates of children's theory of mind development. *Child Development, 80* (2), 318-326.
- Liu, D., Wellman, H. M., Tardif, T., & Sabbagh, M. A. (2008). Theory of mind development in Chinese children: A meta-analysis of false-belief understanding across cultures and languages. *Developmental Psychology, 44* (2), 523-531.
- Rost, G. C., & McMurray, B. (2009). Speaker variability augments phonological processing in early word learning. *Developmental Science, 12* (2), 339-349.
- Sabbagh, M. A., & Baldwin, D. A. (2001). Learning words from knowledgeable versus ignorant speakers: Links between preschoolers' theory of mind and semantic development. *Child Development, 72* (4), 1054-1070.
- Samuelson, L. K., & Horst, J. S. (2007). Dynamic noun generalization: Moment-to-moment interactions shape children's naming biases. *Infancy, 11* (1), 97-110.
- Samuelson, L. K., & Smith, L. B. (1999). Early noun vocabularies: Do ontology, category structure and syntax correspond? *Cognition, 73* (1), 1-33.
- Smith, L. B., Jones, S. S., Landau, B., Gershkoff-Stowe, L., & Samuelson, L. (2002). Object name learning provides on-the-job training for attention. *Psychological Science, 13* (1), 13-19.
- Stager, C. L., & Werker, J. F. (1997). Infants listen for more phonetic detail in speech perception than in word-learning tasks. *Nature, 388*, 381-382.
- Storkel, H. L., Armbruster, J., & Hogan, T. P. (2006). Differentiating phonotactic probability and neighborhood density in adult word learning. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 49* (6), 1175-1192.
- Storkel, H. L., Maekawa, J., & Hoover, J. R. (Submitted). Differentiating the effects of phonotactic probability and neighborhood density on a vocabulary probe: A comparison of preschool children with versus without phonological delays. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*.
- Swingle, D., & Aslin, R. N. (2007). Lexical competition in young children's word learning. *Cognitive Psychology, 54* (2), 99-132.
- Thiessen, E. D. (2007). The effect of distributional information on children's use of phonemic contrasts. *Journal of Memory and Language, 56* (1), 16-34.
- Werker, J. F., Fennell, C. T., Corcoran, K. M., & Stager, C. L. (2002). Infants' ability to learn phonetically similar words: Effects of age and vocabulary size. *Infancy, 3* (1), 1-30.