

# LT4227: FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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**Effective Term**

Semester B 2022/23

## Part I Course Overview

**Course Title**

First Language Acquisition

**Subject Code**

LT - Linguistics and Translation

**Course Number**

4227

**Academic Unit**

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

**College/School**

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

**Course Duration**

One Semester

**Credit Units**

3

**Level**

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

**Medium of Instruction**

English

**Medium of Assessment**

English

**Prerequisites**

LT2201 Introduction to Linguistics or LT2229 Fundamentals of Linguistics or LT2290 Introduction to Language Studies

**Precursors**

LT2204 Language and Mind

**Equivalent Courses**

CTL4227 First Language Acquisition

**Exclusive Courses**

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

The aim of this course is to introduce to students how the first language is acquired, and what major issues are investigated in the first language acquisition research.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the biological bases of language.	x	x	
2	Discover and analyse the phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic developmental patterns of English-speaking and Chinese-speaking children.	x	x	x
3	Discover and examine individual differences in first language acquisition.	x	x	x
4	Compare different approaches to language acquisition.	x	x	x
5	Evaluate the major approaches to language acquisition.	x	x	

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Readings	Reading book chapters and articles.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Lectures	Theories, concepts, explanations, illustrations, synthesis of readings, in-class activities.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3	Class activities	Answer questions, group discussions and activities, audio-visual material analyses, data analysis practice.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

4	Written Assignments	The project require students to collect child language data (or use the data from CHILDES database), apply the concepts and theories they have learnt to discover language developmental patterns analyse data, and present the analyses in written form.	2, 3, 4, 5	
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**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Class activities Short assignments require students to find information, discover language developmental patterns, analyse data, and solve problems. Assignments will be done individually or in group.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	
2	Project The project requires data collection, patterns discovery, application of learnt knowledge to data analyses, and the writing-up of results and analyses. The small-scale project can be done individually or in pair	2, 3, 4, 5	40	

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

60

**Examination (%)**

40

**Examination Duration (Hours)**

2

**Additional Information for ATs**

Examination

Long questions will be set to assess students' mastery of key concepts and ability to analyze and evaluate. (CILO No.1-5)

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

1. Class activities

**Criterion**

Data description and analysis;

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Completion of tutorial assignments with excellent results. The assignments require data description and analysis, and concept application.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Completion of tutorial assignments with good results. The assignments require data description and analysis, and concept application.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Completion of tutorial assignments with fair results. The assignments require data description and analysis, and concept application.

**Marginal (D)**

Completion of tutorial assignments with marginally acceptable results. The assignments require data description and analysis, and concept application.

**Failure (F)**

Completion of tutorial assignments with very poor results. The assignments require data description and analysis, and concept application.

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**Assessment Task**

2. Project

**Criterion**

Data analysis,  
Pattern discovery,  
Knowledge and theory application,  
Presentation skill,  
Creativity (when applicable)

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent data analysis, pattern discovery, theory application, and presentation. Very creative.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good data analysis, pattern discovery, theory application, and presentation. Creative.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Fair data analysis, pattern discovery, theory application and presentation. Fairly creative.

**Marginal (D)**

Marginally acceptable data analysis, pattern discovery, theory application and presentation. Not creative enough.

**Failure (F)**

Poor data analysis and presentation. No pattern discovery. No theory application. Not creative

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**Assessment Task**

3. Examination

**Criterion**

Analyses and evaluation of language data and developmental pattern, and comparison and evaluation of theories.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Demonstration of very high ability to analyse and evaluate language data and developmental patterns, and to compare and evaluate theories.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Demonstration of high ability to analyse and evaluate language data and developmental patterns, and to compare and evaluate theories.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Demonstration of average ability to analyse and evaluate language data and developmental patterns, and to compare and evaluate theories.

**Marginal (D)**

Can marginally analyse and evaluate language data and developmental patterns, and compare and evaluate theories.

**Failure (F)**

Unable to analyse and evaluate language data and developmental patterns, and to compare and evaluate theories.

## Part III Other Information

**Keyword Syllabus**

Animal communication systems, Brain structure and language functions  
Phonological, semantic, morphological, syntactic and pragmatic development of English and Chinese children, Individual differences in first language acquisition,  
Approaches to language acquisition

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Gleason, J. B. & Ratner, N. (Eds.) (2016) <i>The Development of Language</i> . 9th edition. Boston: Pearson

**Additional Readings**

Title	
1	Brown, R. (1973) <i>A First Language: The Early Stages</i> . Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
2	Bloom, P. (2000) <i>How Children Learn the Meaning of Words</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3	Clark, E.V. (2003) <i>First Language Acquisition</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4	Dobbinson, S. , Trott, K. & Griffiths, P. (2006) <i>The Child Language Reader</i> . London: Routledge.
5	Fletcher, P. & MacWhinney, B. (Ed.) (1995) <i>Handbook of Child Language</i> . Oxford: Blackwell.
6	Foster-Cohen, S. H. (1999) <i>An Introduction to Child Language Development</i> . London: Addison Wesley, Longman.
7	Guastic, M. T. (2002) <i>Language Acquisition: the Growth of Grammar</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8	Halliday, M.A.K., Webster, J.J. (Ed.) (2003) <i>The Language of Early Childhood: Vol. 4, The Collected Works of M.A.K. Halliday</i> . London:
9	Ritchie, C.W. & Bhatia, T. (Ed.) (1999) <i>Handbook of Child Language Acquisition</i> . San Diego: Academic Press.
10	Saxton, M (2010) <i>Child Language : Acquisition and Development</i> . Los Angeles; London : SAGE
11	Strozer, J. R. (1994) <i>Language Acquisition after Puberty</i> . Washington: Georgetown University Press.

12	靳洪剛 (1994) 《語言發展心理學》台北:五南圖書出版公司
13	靳洪剛 (1996) 《語言獲得理論研究》北京:中國社會科學出版社
14	謝錫金 (2006) 《香港幼兒口語發展》香港:香港大學出版社
15	周國光、王葆華 (2001) 《兒童句式發展研究和語言習得理論》北京:北京語言文化大學出版社
16	朱曼殊主編 (1986) 《兒童語言發展研究》北京:華東師範大學出版社