

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

MODULE TITLE	CHILD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION		
MODULE CODE	LG2109 (L5)	CREDIT VALUE	10 UK / 5 ECTS
SCHOOL	SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT		

MODULE AIMS

- Introduce students to the main lines of enquiry into the processes of acquisition and development of language in early childhood.
- Enable students to evaluate different approaches to language acquisition.
- Enable students to understand what the study of acquisition can tell us about language as a whole.

MODULE CONTENT

The module will present an overview of the main trends, theories and research methods in child language, beginning with early speech, sound perception, progressing through production in phonology, and then looking at semantic, morphological, syntactic and pragmatic development. Specific topics will include:

- What constitutes language?
- When does it begin to be produced?
- What can child language acquisition tell us about language in general?
- What are the core theories of language acquisition, in particular nativism versus environmental input --Is there a critical period for acquiring language?
- What is the role of child-directed speech in the process of acquisition?
- What can 'atypical' development or 'exceptional circumstances' teach us about the process of acquisition?
- How is the process of dual language acquisition different from second language learning?

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module a student will be able to:	
1.	Understand the processes involved in a child's acquisition of her first language.
2.	Assess how the study of child language contributes to the understanding of language in general.
3.	Evaluate alternative theories of language acquisition.
4.	Produce writing of acceptable standard (as detailed in the English Language and Linguistics Study Skills Handbook).

TEACHING METHODS

The module will employ both formal lectures and workshop seminars which will include discussion, question/answer sequences, and problem-solving activities, as well as theoretical engagement with, and critical application of the ideas introduced. Students will also learn through doing, through peer observation and through reflecting on these activities. Teaching and learning on this module may also comprise class and group discussions, class-based group work, and face-to-face feedback with the tutor. There is an expectation that students will engage interactively with the tutor and their peers during the sessions, and undertake additional reading and preparatory work outside of the lecture and seminar sessions.

In common with other English modules, this module is designed to foster an active, participatory, independent approach to learning, to develop critical faculties and to consolidate and develop written and oral communication skills. Students will obtain co-operative skills during classroom discussions, including the ability to engage in critical debate while showing respect for others. They will also develop problem-solving skills, the ability to manage time and work to deadlines and will be encouraged to adopt reflective practices.

We keep very clear records of attendance and are keen to encourage you to attend your session: attendance at taught sessions will enable you to develop the key skills you need to progress on to the next stage of your career. You should remember that employers expect you to keep to agreed hours in work, and we consider ourselves to be offering you a professional approach to develop good employability skills. Managing your time effectively now will be of significant benefit to you in your future.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

This module is assessed through an essay (100%).