

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- [www.unine.ch/lettres](http://www.unine.ch/lettres)

### Seminar 1: First Language Acquisition (2AN1138)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
<b>Pilier principal B A - langue et littérature anglaises</b>	<b>Séminaire: 2 ph</b>	Voir ci-dessous	5
<b>Pilier principal M A - sciences du langage et de la communication</b>	<b>Séminaire: 2 ph</b>	Voir ci-dessous	5
<b>Pilier secondaire B A - langue et littérature anglaises</b>	<b>Séminaire: 2 ph</b>	Voir ci-dessous	5
<b>Pilier secondaire M A - sciences du langage et de la communication</b>	<b>Séminaire: 2 ph</b>	Voir ci-dessous	5

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

#### Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

#### Equipe enseignante

Martin Hilpert

#### Contenu

The three goals of this course are the following: (i) students will discover how young children learn a first language and how linguists study first language acquisition (ii) students will learn to read academic literature on language acquisition; and (iii) students will learn to understand and compare different linguistic theories of first language acquisition.

How do children learn to talk? In this class, we will talk about the developmental milestones that babies and children go through when they first learn language. We will discuss key differences between first and second language learning, and we will be concerned with hotly debated questions surrounding the very nature of language learning ('Are children better language learners than adults?' 'Is there a critical time window for the acquisition process?' 'Do children work out their native language by means of innate linguistic knowledge?'). These questions will require us to familiarize ourselves with different methods for studying learner language, from studying child language in digital corpora (transcribed electronic text collections) to experimental techniques and their statistical evaluation.

#### Forme de l'évaluation

There are four main tasks that will be evaluated. The first task is oral participation in the classroom discussions (10%). The second task consists of regular reading homework (10%). The third task is a written exam at the end of the class (60%). The fourth task is a written reaction essay that responds to an existing research article on first language acquisition (20%).

In order to pass the class, all three evaluated tasks need to be passable. Failure to pass in one or more of them will lead to a rattrapage of a longer, comprehensive written exam (100%).

#### Documentation

Students are asked to buy a copy of the following textbook:  
Tomasello, Michael. 2003. *Constructing a Language*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.  
ISBN: 978-0674017641

Additional readings will be distributed electronically via moodle.

#### Pré-requis

Lecture: Introduction to English Linguistics

#### Forme de l'enseignement

The class will consist of lectures, group project work, and group discussions.

#### Objectifs d'apprentissage

Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Compare first language acquisition and second language acquisition
- Extract the most important information from published research articles

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- [www.unine.ch/lettres](http://www.unine.ch/lettres)

### **Seminar 1: First Language Acquisition (2AN1138)**

- Describe and discuss different linguistic theories of first language acquisition
- Distinguish different phases and processes of first language acquisition
- Synthesise research findings

#### **Compétences transférables**

- Communicate in a second language
- Apply knowledge to new situations
- Present nonsense in the third point of a list
- Generate new ideas