

# Acquisition and Arguments

## Linguistics 750

Dickinson 210

Fall 2013

Wednesday 2:30–5:10

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Tuesday/Thursday 3:00–4:00

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website:

<http://courses.umass.edu/kbj/750/750.html>

We are going to examine papers that deal with argument structure (primarily of verbs) and how it is acquired by first language learners. This includes a look at what is involved in the “dative alternation” (*give X Y* vs. *give X to Y*), the transitive alternation (*X melted* vs. *Y melted X*), the passive alternation (*X read Y* vs. *Y was read by X*) and raising constructions. Our goal is to clarify the present theoretical analyses of these phenomena and what is known about how they are acquired by children.

Students are expected to:

1. Give a 30 minute in-class presentation of one of the papers in the reading list (or something else of your choosing). The presentations will be at one of the following time slots.
  - October 23: 2:30–3:00
  - October 23: 3:00–3:30
  - October 30: 2:30–3:00
  - October 30: 3:00–3:30
  - November 6: 2:30–3:00
  - November 6: 3:00–3:30

You should choose one (or two) of these slots and let us both know what you plan to present before October 16.

2. Write a paper or do an experiment and give a 30-minute presentation of it in the final class, or
3. Design an experiment and give a second presentation of one of the papers in the reading list (or of your choosing)

A plan is sketched overleaf, but consult the website for the inevitable changes.

## A Plan

1	September 4: Introduction	September 11: The Dative Alternation <i>readings:</i> Gropen <i>et al.</i> (1989) Harley (2002), Harley and Jung (2008)	2
3	September 18: Dative Alternations <i>readings:</i> Beck and Snyder (2001) Pylkkanen (2002) Hovav and Levin (2008)	September 25: Dative Alternations	4
5	October 2: Transitive Alternations 1	October 9: Transitive Alternations 2	6
7	October 16: Transitive Alternations 3	October 23: presentations William Snyder (UConn) gives a talk	8
9	October 30: presentations Nina Hyams (UCLA) gives a talk	November 6: presentations Passives and Raising: 1	10
*	November 13: no class	November 20: Passives and Raising 2	11
12	November 27: Passives and Raising 3	December 4: Student Presentations	13