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

2 - September 11: The Dative Alternation
   readings:
   Gropen et al. (1989)
   Harley (2002), Harley and Jung (2008)

3 - September 18: Dative Alternations
   readings:
   Beck and Snyder (2001)
   Pylkkänen (2002)
   Hovav and Levin (2008)

4 - September 25: Dative Alternations

5 - October 2: Transitive Alternations 1

6 - October 9: Transitive Alternations 2

7 - October 16: Transitive Alternations 3

8 - October 23: presentations
   William Snyder (UConn) gives a talk

9 - October 30: presentations
   Nina Hyams (UCLA) gives a talk

10 - November 6: presentations
    Passives and Raising: 1

* - November 13: no class

11 - November 20: Passives and Raising 2

12 - November 27: Passives and Raising 3

13 - December 4: Student Presentations