Syllabus

THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD - 3699

Last update 10-05-2015

**HU Credits:** 2

**Degree/Cycle:** 2nd degree (Master)

**Responsible Department:** Early Childhood Graduate Studies

**Academic year:** 2

**Semester:** 1st Semester

**Teaching Languages:** Hebrew

**Campus:** Mt. Scopus

**Course/Module Coordinator:** Professor Cory Shulman

**Coordinator Email:** cory.shulman@mail.huji.ac.il

**Coordinator Office Hours:** Wednesdays 12:00-13:00 or by appointment

**Teaching Staff:**

Prof Cory Shulman
Course/Module description:
This course deals with current theories and issues regarding cognitive and language development in early childhood, focusing on imitation as a specific skill which interfaces with cognitive and language development. Developmental processes will be discussed in light of professional debates. Questions such as "when do infants begin to think?"; "what are the biological and environmental influences on human thought and language?" and "what are the underlying mechanisms in cognitive and language development?". We deal with the elements of imitation, specifically from internal representations necessary for imitation, thought and language. Additionally, mentalization and other higher level cognitive functions will be discussed.

Course/Module aims:
Students will understand the interplay between the development of different abilities over time.
Students will analyze cognitive processes sequentially and structurally.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
Students will be able to assess developmental level or skills of a child under the age of five.
Students will be able to analyze the interrelatedness between cognition, language and imitation.

Attendance requirements(%):
80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal lectures, classroom discussions and exercises.

Course/Module Content:
1. Defining cognition, language, communication and imitation.
2. Development of imitation focusing on perinatal imitation and its motor, cognitive, social and language interface.
3. Theories of cognitive development 
4. Infancy-understanding the physical world
5. Infancy- understanding the social world
6. Representation and agency
7. Language and communication development
8. Logical development, drawing conclusions and causal reasoning
9. Symbolic thinking, mental representation and theory of mind in early childhood
10. Executive functions and meta-cognition in early childhood
11. Directions for the future

Required Reading:

Additional Reading Material:
Development, 7, 269-272.
Behavior and Development, 30(2), 325-335.


**Course/Module evaluation:**
End of year written/oral examination 65 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 35 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

**Additional information:**
None