This course is about one of the greatest miracles of the human experience: the acquisition of language. The goal of this course is to introduce students to the field of first language acquisition research; to present them with the fundamental questions of the field; and to familiarize them with some basic methodological tools required for pursuing independent research. We will discuss different language acquisition theories, the development of the various subparts of language and a number of methodologies to study child language. This course is not designed to provide definitive answers; its central aim is to intellectually stimulate the students and motivate them to further explore this incredible capacity which defines us as humans.

**Topics to be discussed:**

- Problems of language acquisition
- Poverty of the Stimulus
- Speech perception in infants
- Stages of Language Acquisition
- Critical period hypothesis
- Core knowledge systems - Modularity
- Behaviorism vs. Nativism, UG, Principles & Parameters, nature of development
- Competence/performance
- From theory to experiments
- Methods for assessing children’s linguistic knowledge