

First Language Acquisition

Now in its fourth edition, this textbook provides a chronological account of first language acquisition, showing how young children acquire language in their conversational interactions with adult speakers. It draws on diary records and experimental studies from leaders in the field to document different stages and different aspects of what children master. Successive chapters detail infants' and young children's progression from attending to adult faces, gaze, and hand motions, to their first attempts at communicating with gaze and gesture, then adding words and constructions. It comprehensively covers the acquisition of the core areas of language – phonetics and phonology, lexicon, grammar and sentence structure, and meaning – as well as how children acquire discourse and conversational skills. This edition includes new sections on how children build “common ground” with adults and other children, individual differences in children's language development, how they collaborate with adults in constructing utterances, and how they qualify beliefs.

EVE V. CLARK is Lyman Professor in Humanities and Professor of Linguistics and Symbolic Systems, Emerita at the Department of Linguistics, Stanford University and is the 2021 recipient of the Roger Brown Award for her research on language acquisition. Recent publications include *Language in Children* (2017).

“Twenty years after its first edition, Eve Clark has again fully updated her now classic textbook. It will continue to be the world’s most comprehensive and evenly balanced text on first language acquisition.”

Willem Levelt, *Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics*

“A magnificent overview of the science (and beauty) of how children learn to talk. In clear, compelling prose, the book illustrates the process and product of language acquisition, highlighting its social and interactional dimensions. A wonderful hook into the topic, for novices and experts alike.”

Prof. Inbal Arnon, *Psychology Department, Hebrew University*

First Language Acquisition

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To Damon Alistair
for all his talk

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Acknowledgments

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