

Psychology 3240: The Psychology of Language
Autumn 2012

Class meetings: MWF 13:00-13:50 pm, UH C610
Office: UH C876
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Course description: This course provides an introduction to psycholinguistics and to some of the important issues in the study of language processing and language acquisition. Topics include: How does the human mind process sounds, words, and sentences? How do children learn language? What is the biological basis for language?

Course objectives: This course will acquaint you with the primary theoretical and experimental issues involved in the study of natural language and the brain, and will provide you with the opportunity to learn how to evaluate and discuss these issues in a critical and coherent manner. It will also increase your awareness of the importance of human language and add to your understanding of human beings as language speakers.

Textbook:

David W. Carroll (2008) *Psychology of Language. 5th Edition* Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Coursework and grading: Your final grade will be based on the total number of points you accumulate during the semester. Points are earned in the following ways and correspond to the scale below.

Points:

In-class activities	20 pts
Presentation	10 pts
Midterm	20 pts
Final	50 pts
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Total	100 pts

Grading scale:

A+	100 – 90	B+	77 – 80	C+	67 – 70	D+	55 – 60	E	0 – 50
A	85 – 90	B	73 – 77	C	63 – 67	D	50 – 55		
A-	80 – 85	B-	70 – 73	C-	60 – 63				

Course Requirements:

Readings: Readings include both the textbook and other relevant journal articles. The complete reading list can be found at the end of this outline. You can find these articles from the University library. Readings should be completed in advance. Since the major format of this class is in-class discussion of these readings, it is crucial for you to complete readings ahead of time. You should bring the textbook and other supplementary readings to class every day as handy references.

In-class Activities: There will be a number of in-class activities throughout the semester, which count 20% towards your final grade. In-class activities can only be completed in class. No missing activity can be made up. The whole class will be divided into groups of 4 to 5 students. For each in-class activity, each group only hands in one answer sheet for grading. Only those students who attend classes and contribute to the completion of the answer sheet get credits.

Group presentations: Each student will participate in a group presentation which involves reading of a particular article (chosen from the reading list) and then presenting it to the class. The schedules of which articles and when to present are listed on the weekly schedule. During the preparation of the presentation, your initiative is encouraged: Any addition of supplementary material relevant to your presentation will be greatly appreciated. Just make sure you stick to the time limit given for each presentation. You are expected to choose an article at the second class session. A detailed description of how to present the articles will be distributed. Evaluation will be based on the presentation content, organization, clarity, timing, etc.

Exams: There will be one midterm and one final exam. The final exam will be cumulative in the traditional sense: questions will be based on the entire course. The exam questions will test things discussed in class, including all the readings, lectures, in-class activities, and presentations. No make-up midterm or final exam will be given without a valid medical note or other official documentation.

Quizzes: You will be given informal quizzes from time to time during the entire semester. These quizzes are designed to test your understanding of the critical course materials covered in lectures or readings. Quizzes will NOT be graded and therefore are NOT counted towards your final grade.

Course website: All course materials will be posted to Moodle. You can log on to Moodle course using your U of L computer account.

Students with Special Needs: If you have any special needs that require accommodation, it is your responsibility to contact Counseling Services to acquire an official letter concerning your situation. Accommodations will only be given upon receiving the official notification from that office.

Tentative weekly schedule

Month	Date	Day	Topic	Reading
Sep	5	W	Introduction	Chap 1
	7	F		
	10	M	Evolution of human language	Chap 13 (pp.379-392)
	12	W	Linguistic Principles	Chap 2
	14	F	Psychological mechanisms	Chap 3
	17	M	<i>Presentation 1</i>	Atkinson (2011); Cysouw (2012); Wang (2012)
	19	W	<i>Presentation 2</i>	Gupta (2005); Boutela (2004)
	21	F	Perception of spoken language	Chap 4 (pp.78-90)
	24	M		
	26	W	<i>Presentation 3</i>	McMurray (2002); Tanenhaus (1995)
	28	F	Perception of written language	Chap 4 (91-100)
Oct	1	M		
	3	W	<i>Presentation 4</i>	Coderre (2008); Siok (2004);
	5	F	Word processing	Chap 5
	8	M	<i>Holiday no class</i>	
	10	W		
	12	F	<i>FL away for conference</i>	
	15	M	<i>Midterm review</i>	
	17	W	Midterm	
	19	F	Sentence processing	Chap 6
	22	M		
	24	W	<i>Presentation 5</i>	Schafer (2000); Matlock (2005)
	26	F	Language Production	Chap 8
	29	M		
	31	W	<i>Presentation 6</i>	Houde (1998); Frisch (2002)
Nov	2	F	Language acquisition	Chap 10 & 11
	5	M		
	7	W		
	9	F	<i>Presentation 7</i>	Saffran (1996); Glenwright (2010)
	12	M	<i>Holiday no class</i>	
	14	W	<i>Presentation 8</i>	Imai (2008); MacNeilage (2000)
	16	F	Processes of language acquisition	Chap 12
	19	M		
	21	W	<i>Presentation 9</i>	Senghas (2004); Kaplan (1999)
	23	F	Biological Foundations	Chap 13 (pp.354-379)
	26	M		
	28	W	<i>Presentation 10</i>	Crinion (2006); Helmuth (2001)
	30	F	Language, culture, and cognition	Chap 14
Dec	3	M		
	5	W	<i>Presentation 11</i>	Gordon (2004); Samulson (2002)
	7	F	<i>Final exam review</i>	
	12	W	Final exam	9:00am-12:00pm

Reading list:

- Atkinson, Q. D. (2011). Phonemic diversity supports a serial founder effect model of language expansion from Africa. *Science*, 332, 346-349.
- Boutla, M., Supalla, T., Newport, E. L., & Bavelier, D. (2004). Short-term memory span: insights from sign language. *Nature (Neuroscience)*, 7(9), 997-1002.
- Conderre, E. L., Filippi, C. G., Newhouse, P. A., & Dumas, J. A. (2008). The stroop effect in kana and kanji scripts in native Japanese speakers: An fMRI study. *Brain & Language*, 107, 124-132.
- Crinion, J., Turner, R., Grogan, A., Hanakawa, T., Noppeney, U., Devlin, J. T., Price, C. J. (2006). Language control in the bilingual brain. *Science*, 312, 1537-1540.
- Cysouw, M., Dediu, D., & Moran, S. (2012). Comment on "Phonemic diversity supports a serial founder effect model of language expansion from Africa". *Science*, 335, 657-b.
- Frisch, S. A., & Wright, R. (2002). The phonetics of phonological speech errors: An acoustic analysis of slips of the tongue. *Journal of Phonetics*, 30, 139-162.
- Glenwright, M., & Pexman, P. M. (2010). Development of children's ability to distinguish sarcasm and verbal irony. *Journal of Child Language*, 37, 429-451.
- Gordon, P. (2004). Numerical cognition without words: evidence from Amazonia. *Science*, 306, 496-499.
- Gupta, P. (2005). Primacy and recency in nonword repetition. *Memory*, 13(3/4), 318-324.
- Helmuth, L. (2001). Same brains, different languages. *Science*, 291, 2064-2065.
- Houde, J. F., & Jordan, M. I. (1998). Sensorimotor adaptation in speech production. *Science*, 279, 1213-1215.
- Imai, M., Kita, S., Nagumo, M., & Okada, H. (2008). Sound symbolism facilitates early verb learning. *Cognition*, 109, 54-65.
- Kaplan, P. S., Bachorowski, J., & Zarlengo-Strouse, P. (1999). Child-directed speech produced by mothers with symptoms of depression fails to promote associative learning in 4-month-old infants. *Child Development*, 70, 560-570.
- MacNeilage, P. F., & Davis, B. L. (2000). On the origin of internal structure of word forms. *Science*, 288, 527-530.
- Matlock, T., Ramscar, M., & Boroditsky, L. (2005). On the experimental link between spatial and temporal language. *Cognitive Science*, 29, 655-664.
- McMurray, B., Tanenhaus, M. K., & Aslin, R. N. (2002). Gradient effects of within-category phonetic variation on lexical access. *Cognition*, 86, B33-B42.
- Saffran, J. R., Aslin, R. N., & Newport, E. L. (1996). Statistical learning by 8-month-old infants. *Science*, 274, 1926-1928.
- Samuelson, L. K. (2002). Statistical regularities in vocabulary guide language acquisition in connectionist models and 15-20 month olds. *Developmental Psychology*, 38, 1016-1037.
- Schafer, A. J., Speer, S. R., Warren, P., & White, D. (2000). Intonational disambiguation in sentence production and comprehension. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 29, 169-182.
- Senghas, A., Kita, S., & Ozyurek, A. (2004). Children creating core properties of language: Evidence from an emerging sign language in Nicaragua. *Science*, 305, 1779-1781.
- Siok, W. T., Perfetti, C. A., Jin, Z., & Tan, L. H. (2004). Biological abnormality of impaired reading is constrained by culture. *Nature*, 431, 71-76.
- Tanenhaus, M. K., Spivey-Knowlton, M. J., Eberhard, K. M., & Sedivy, J. C. (1995). Integration of visual and linguistic information in spoken language comprehension. *Science*, 268, 1632-1634.
- Wang, C., Ding, Q., Tao, H., & Li, H. (2012). Comment on "Phonemic diversity supports a serial founder effect model of language expansion from Africa". *Science*, 335, 657-c.