

LIN 4701: Psycholinguistics

Spring 2015, Section 3760

Class Meeting Times and Places

MWF 3rd Period (9:35-10:25)

Anderson 13

Professor

Dr. Wind Cowles

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Office Hours:

Wednesdays 12:30-3pm

Thursdays 1-3:45pm

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Course Rationale and Objectives

The ability to use language is considered unique to humans. In many ways, our ability for language is surprisingly robust – it can survive even when other cognitive abilities fail, and develop in children even with poor language input. However, it can also be quite fragile – even a small stroke (in the wrong place) can severely impair language function, and several developmental disorders negatively affect language ability. Language is a very important aspect of our daily lives. It is the primary way in which we are able to communicate very complex, multi-dimensional ideas and make them fit into a string of sounds that unfold over time.

How do we accomplish this feat? How do we convey our thoughts in this way? How are we able to take a string of sounds and getting meaning from them? How did we develop this ability? What happens in people who fail to acquire this ability, or lose it due to injury? Psycholinguistics concerns itself with all of these questions and more.

At the end of this course you should be able to *critically* read popular media reporting of language research as well as feel confident reading about and discussing many issues that are relevant in child development, second language learning, linguistics, and psychology.

This course is intended as an introduction to the field of psycholinguistics, as such it will cover the following topics:

- Introduction to basic linguistic principles and psychological mechanisms
- Speech perception (processing language sounds)
- The lexicon (processing words)
- Sentence and discourse processing (putting words together)
- Language production, dialogue and conversation
- Child language acquisition, Bilingualism and second language acquisition
- Biological foundation of language (language and the brain)
- Language, culture and cognition

Course Requirements and Policies

You should plan to spend 2-3 hours of outside time per hour spent in class. All students are responsible for attending all classes, taking all examinations at the scheduled times, and turning in all assignments on time.

Exams

There will be two in-class, closed-book exams that will cover material from the lectures and assigned readings. Exams will consist of a mix of different question types.

Homework Assignments

Homework assignments will be made available on Canvas a week before they are due, and need to be turned in via Canvas **by 5pm** on the day that they are listed in the schedule below.

In-class Activities

Some in-class activities will require a little bit of prior preparation. In these cases, students will be asked to submit a paper copy of this preparation. Activity participation will be scored on a check system, not graded. Most will receive a ✓ to acknowledge completed work, however a ✓+ or ✓- may be given when a student has either done an exceptional job or is lacking in some effort.

Research Project Assignment

Each student complete **two** small-scale research projects by the appropriate due dates. All instructions and materials for these projects will be provided on Canvas and discussed in class.

Optional Research Bonus Assignment

Students who wish to may increase ONE of their research project grades by 3 points (out of 100, effectively resulting in a half-step boost; e.g. a B+ to an A-) by participating in 2 hours or 2 separate psycholinguistic experiments (of any length) through the LIN-SLHS participant pool. A list of experiments can be found at:

<http://slhs.php.ufl.edu/student-info/participant-pool-2>

This site will be updated throughout the semester. Experiments that you have previously participated in, or were paid to participate in *cannot* count toward this. Please submit a signed copy of the consent form along with a short (< 250 word) description of your experience in the study to get this bonus credit.

Grades

Here is a breakdown of each of the requirements and their contribution to the final grade:

Exam #1:	25%	Homework Assignments:	25% (5 x 5%)
Exam #2:	25%	Research Requirement:	20% (2 x 10%)
		Class Participation/Activities:	5%

Grades will be assigned based on the following distribution:

88-90.9 A-	91-100 A	
78-80.9 B-	81-84.9 B	85-87.9 B+
68-70.9 C-	71-74.9 C	75-77.9 C+
58-60.9 D-	61-64.9 D	65-67.9 D+
(Below 58 = E)		

Please note that a grade of C- is *not* a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades>

Readings

The textbook for the course is:

Sedivy, J. (2014) *Language in Mind: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*. Sinauer Associates.

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodation.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. An academic honesty offence is defined as the act of lying, cheating, or stealing information so that one gains academic advantage. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment. For more information, refer to: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>.

Make-up Policy

In accordance with UF policy, students will be allowed to make up work that they miss as the result of an excused absence. For absences that can be foreseen (e.g. religious observance, UF-related travel), students **MUST** inform me about the absence in advance so that arrangements can be made. For unexpected absences (e.g. illness), students should contact me as soon as reasonably possible.

(See <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> for a list of excusable absences.)

Course Outline (subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment(s)
1	Jan. 7	Introduction	
	Jan. 9	Introduction	Reading: Chapter 1
2	Jan. 12	Methods in Psycholinguistics	
	Jan. 14	Methods in Psycholinguistics	
	Jan. 16	Origins of Human Language	Reading: Chapter 2
	Jan. 19	[NO CLASS]	
3	Jan. 21	Language and Brain	Reading: Chapter 3
	Jan. 23		HW #1 due
4	Jan. 26	Acquisition: Sounds	Reading: Chapter 4
	Jan. 28		
	Jan. 30	Acquisition: Words	Reading: Chapter 5
	Feb. 2	Acquisition: Structures	Reading: Chapter 6
5	Feb. 4		HW #2 due
	Feb. 6	Recognizing Words	Reading: Chapter 7
	Feb. 9		
6	Feb. 11	Sentence Processing	Reading: Chapter 8
	Feb. 13		Research Project 1 due
	Feb. 16	More Sentence Processing	
7	Feb. 18		HW #3 due
	Feb. 20		
	Feb. 23	Wrap-up	
8	Feb. 25	Exam 2 Review	
	Feb. 27	Exam 1 EXAM	

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment(s)
9		<i>Spring break</i>	
	Mar. 9	Sentence Production	Reading: Chapter 9
10	Mar. 11		
	Mar. 13		
	Mar. 16	More Sentence Production	HW #4 due
11	Mar. 18	TBA	
	Mar. 20	TBA	
	Mar. 23	Discourse Processing	Reading: Chapter 10
12	Mar. 25		
	Mar. 27		
	Mar. 30	Dialogue	Reading: Chapter 11
13	Apr. 1		
	Apr. 3		HW #5 due
	Apr. 6	Cross-Linguistic Language	Reading: Chapter 12
14	Apr. 8		
	Apr. 10	Language, Culture and Cognition	
	Apr. 13	Bilingual Representations	Reading: TBA
15	Apr. 15		Research Project 2 due
	Apr. 17	Sign Languages	Reading: Using your hands (see Canvas)
	Apr. 20	Exam 2 Review and Course Wrap Up	
16	Apr. 22	Exam 2	