

Instructor: Eve Higby
Office: QH 345.F1
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Schedule: Tu Th 12:15-1:30
Location: Queens Hall 340

Required textbook

Fernandez, E. M., & Cairns, H. S. (2010). *Fundamentals of Psycholinguistics*. Wiley Blackwell.
ISBN: 9781405191470

Description of the course

Bulletin course description: 3 hr.; 3 cr. Linguistic and psychological processes underlying communication

This course will introduce you to basic concepts in linguistics and psycholinguistics. We will explore the way that language is represented in the mind and the way that language is processed at various levels, which include things like the processing of speech sounds, the retrieval of specific lexical items from memory, the way meanings are linked to each other in a mental network, the reason words get put into a specific order in a sentence, and why sometimes a sentence can have two different meanings. Additional fundamental topics of the course include how language is acquired by children and what the study of multilingualism and of various language disorders can teach us about language processing in general. Rather than studying linguistics as an abstract entity, we will focus on how language is rooted in our mental concepts and constrained by mental computation and capacities. In that sense, this course explores the interaction between language and cognitive processes.

As language and communication are central to the human experience, you will find the topics that we cover in this course to touch on many aspects of life that are important to you, allowing you to make connections between what you read and discuss in class and your language use in everyday life. You will discover hidden gems of insight in some of the most familiar aspects of language, and you will begin to view language and communication in a completely new way. The fundamental concepts you learn in this course will set the stage for future courses that involve the analysis of language at many levels (such as phonetics or syntax), the diagnosis of various language disorders and decisions about effective treatment options, comparing typical and atypical child language development, the scientific study of the speech and hearing sciences, and qualitative and quantitative methods used in studies of language. Thus, careful attention paid to learning the material in this course will pay off in all the rest of your courses on speech and language!

Effective learning is accomplished through active participation in the course. I make participation easy for you through a variety of ways to interact during and outside of class. I expect you to engage in classroom discussions, and I will challenge you to think critically about the different theories and experimental findings that we will read about and discuss. I will also ask you at various points to consider how the material relates to your everyday experience with language.

Course objectives

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Explain the relationship between thought, language, and speech/sign.
2. Identify the components of language in a given language sample and describe how those components work together.
3. Explain the brain and neurocognitive bases of language processing.
4. Describe the sequence of development in child language acquisition.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of how speech is produced.
6. Identify the cognitive mechanisms involved in speech comprehension.
7. Provide examples of how bilingual and monolingual language processing differs.
8. List the typical methods used in psycholinguistic research.
9. Develop your ability to critically analyze and interpret research on language.

Blackboard

We will use the CUNY Blackboard platform for all course materials. If you do not know how to use the Blackboard system, please let me know within the first week of class.

You will find the following materials on the course Blackboard page:

- Lecture notes
- HW assignments
- Quiz questions
- Additional resources
- Announcements

Class meetings

TUE, January 28	What is Psycholinguistics?	
THU, January 30	Language and Thought: Where does language reside?	
TUE, February 2	Language and Thought: How does language influence thought?	
THU, February 6	Phonology: What is the sound inventory of a language?	
TUE, February 11	Morphology: How are words formed?	
THU, February 13	Syntax: Why do we need grammar?	
TUE, February 18	The Lexicon: How do we label our world?	
THU, February 20	NO CLASS: Monday schedule	
TUE, February 25	Review of Ch. 1 & 2	
THU, February 27	Biological basis of language: How do we know language is biological?	ONLINE EXAM 1 DUE (CH. 1 & 2)
TUE, March 4	Biological basis of language: What can neuroimaging tell us about language processing?	
THU, March 6	Biological basis of language: Where in the brain is language processed?	
TUE, March 11	First language acquisition: Are we predisposed to learn language?	
THU, March 13	First language acquisition: Developmental stages in language acquisition	REACTION PAPER 1 DUE (CH. 3)
TUE, March 18	First language decline: What happens to language processing in the elderly?	
THU, March 20	Second language acquisition: Is learning a second language different	

	from learning the first?	
TUE, March 25	First and second language attrition: What happens to a language we don't use anymore?	
THU, March 27	Review of Ch. 3 & 4 Speech production: What goes on before we open our mouths?	
TUE, April 1	Speech production: Why do we make speech errors?	ONLINE EXAM 2 DUE (CH. 3 & 4)
THU, April 3	Speech perception: How can we make sense of all different types of accents and ways of speaking?	
TUE, April 8	Speech perception: Does our ear ever trick us?	
THU, April 10	Lexical access and lexical retrieval: It's on the tip of my tongue!	
TUE, April 15	NO CLASS: Spring Recess	
THU, April 17	NO CLASS: Spring Recess	
TUE, April 22	NO CLASS: Spring Recess	
THU, April 24	Review of Ch. 5 & 6	ONLINE EXAM 3 DUE (CH. 5 & 6)
TUE, April 29	Structural processing: How do we build sentence structure so quickly?	
THU, May 1	Structural processing: What elements are needed to make sense of sentences?	
TUE, May 6	Discourse: What do conversations really look like?	
THU, May 8	Working Memory: What limits our language skills?	
TUE, May 13	Bilingual cognition: Is harder language usage better for your mind?	
THU, May 15	Review of Ch. 7 & 8	REACTION PAPER 2 DUE (CH. 7)
May 19-23	Final Exam date to be announced	

Student Responsibilities

1. Respectful classroom behavior
 1. Arrive on time
 2. Silence cell phones
 3. No cell phone use
 4. No chatter
 5. Wireless feature turned off on laptops
2. Active participation in class
3. Keep up with announcements and assignments for class. Announcements will be sent to your QC email address, so always check your QC email daily.
4. When absent, acquire missed information from peers and Blackboard

Assessments

In-class quizzes	35%
Online exams (3)	35%
Reaction papers (2)	30%

In-class quizzes

The first 5-10 minutes of every class will involve a short quiz. This quiz is sometimes individual and sometimes interactive. You will always know the quiz question in advance! I will give 3 possible quiz

questions at the end of every class. You will be asked to answer only one of these questions at the beginning of the next class. If you are late for class or miss class, you will not be able to make up the quiz (so come on time!). There are 28 classes, so 28 quizzes, for a total of 35% of the final grade. No notes or materials are allowed to be used on the quizzes.

Online exams

Exams will primarily be multiple-choice and short answer. They will cover content from the lectures and from the textbook. These exams will be taken through Blackboard during scheduled times. You will have an opportunity to take a practice quiz before the real one. The practice quizzes will not be counted toward your grade. While you are allowed to refer to your notes during the exam, the time allowed to complete the exam will be quite strict, so you are strongly urged to review your notes and reading materials prior to taking the exam since you will not have enough time to look up most questions during the exam.

There will be an in-person cumulative final exam on the scheduled exam date. This final exam will NOT be online and it must be taken in person at the scheduled date and time. At the end of the term, I will drop the lowest exam grade from the four exams.

Missed exams: No exams will be made up. You will be responsible for completing the online exams during the scheduled times. To improve your grade after a missed exam, you can take the cumulative final and the missed exam will be dropped.

Reaction papers

You will complete two papers during the course expressing your reaction to specific open-ended, analytical questions. These papers are designed to demonstrate your ability to synthesize the concepts learned throughout the course and your ability to think critically about these concepts. All papers must be typed, 12-pt font, with one-inch margins. If you are not a native speaker of English, please ask a native speaker to check your paper for errors before submitting the final version to me.

Missed assignments: No assignments can be made up. The due dates and instructions for the assignments are provided far enough in advance. If you have other commitments that conflict with the time the assignment is due, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to turn the paper in early.

Laptops and tablets

Use of laptops and tablets in class is permitted for note-taking and viewing course-related materials. During class, the wireless connection must be turned off and all sounds must be muted. If these restrictions are not met, the student will not be permitted to use the device during the class period.

Ethical conduct

All work produced for this class is expected to be your own. While you are allowed to study the quiz questions with other students, all quizzes must show original wording. In addition, all online exams and reaction papers must be completed by you and not by anyone else. To review QC's policy on academic integrity, go to:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/studev/Documents/Academic%20Integrity%20Violation%20Form%20RV.pdf>.