

PSYC 344: PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

Fall 2018, Gore Hall 204

Section 010: MWF 1:25-2:15

PROFESSOR

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TEACHING ASSISTANT

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Describes the nature of human language, how it is used to speak and comprehend, and how it is learned. Subtopics include language and thought, animal communication, and language in special populations, such as children born deaf or blind.

COURSE PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of this course is to give you a foundation in the study of language as a component of the mind. We will cover each of the areas of linguistic knowledge (phonetics and phonology, morphology and the lexicon, syntax and semantics, and discourse), stopping to meander down several side paths – language acquisition, representation and processing in the brain, the relationship between language and thought, second language learning, and so on.

By the end of this course, you should:

- recognize the basic concepts and theories in the study of language and mind
- be able to draw upon scientific evidence in order to evaluate claims about human language
- be proficient in communicating relevant findings and arguments

COURSE RESOURCES

CANVAS

The course syllabus, assigned readings, lecture slides, and UD capture recordings will be posted to Canvas throughout the semester. Grades will be maintained in the Gradebook in Canvas, and will be visible to you as the course proceeds.

There is no required text to purchase for this course.

UD CAPTURE

To catch up after a missed class, please review the UD capture video recording and review any course materials that have been posted to Canvas.

<https://udcapture.udel.edu/2018f/psyc344-010/>

CLASS STRUCTURE

Your learning in this class will come from a combination of what we do in the classroom and what you do on your own outside of class.

Class sessions will consist of instructor-presented material as well as some classroom activities and group discussions. You are expected to be prepared for class, to attend all class meetings, and to arrive on time; being present in class will be critical to your understanding of the course material.

GRADING

	Percent of Final Grade	
Think About It	9 %	18 assignments, worth 0.5 pts each
Thought Papers	24 %	4 assignments, worth 6 pts each
Exams	65 %	4 exams, weighted as described below
Course Reflections	2 %	2 reflections, worth 1 pt each

THINK ABOUT IT (9%)

“Think About It” assignments are short online assignments designed to help you focus on a few main points from the assigned reading and to jumpstart your thinking on a topic that we will further discuss in class.

These assignments will be graded mainly for completion – as long as you have provided a thoughtful response to the questions, you will receive full credit for these assignments. Each of the 18 Think About It assignments is worth 0.5 points toward your final course grade. Assigned pages from the textbook are listed in the Schedule.

THOUGHT PAPERS (24%)

“Thought Paper” assignments are one- to two- page responses that you give to a question of interest to the lay public, such as “Will being bilingual help or hurt my child’s language development?” You should respond to the question posed as if you are addressing someone who has not taken the class and doesn’t have a background in language or linguistics. The purpose of these papers is to help you connect what you are learning in this class to everyday life and to communicate it effectively.

You should complete **four** of the Thought Paper assignments. Each Thought Paper is worth 6 points toward your final course grade. Due dates are listed in the Schedule.

EXAMS (65%)

Four in-class exams will test your knowledge of the basic concepts and theories in the study of language and mind. You are responsible for all material covered in class as well as in the readings. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions, as well as brief short-answer / essay questions. The exams are not cumulative.

Taken together, your exam grades will count towards 65% of your final course grade. In order to shift the exam portion of your final grade towards the exams you did the best on, the relative weight of each exam will be as follows:

25%	Your BEST exam grade
15%	Your second best exam grade
15%	Your third best exam grade
10%	Your LOWEST exam grade

Prior to the exams, you will be provided with a study guide to help you focus on the content you will be tested on.

Your attendance *is required* on the days in which there is an in-class exam. In the event of an emergency or unavoidable conflict, prior to the start of the regularly scheduled exam, you must let your professor know that you will be missing the exam. If you are eligible to take a make up exam (see below) the TA will schedule and proctor your make up exam **within one week**. At the time of your scheduled make-up exam, you must provide written documentation of the reason for your absence.

Eligibility

You are eligible to take a make-up exam within one week of the originally scheduled exam only under the following two circumstances:

- You know ahead of time that you must miss an exam because of a previously scheduled conflict that you are not able to change (e.g., a university-sponsored sports competition that are you participating in, surgery, a religious event), or
- In the case of serious illness or emergency.

COURSE REFLECTIONS (2%)

Course Reflections are graded for completion. Each of the 2 Course Reflections is worth 1 point toward your final course grade.

The first Course Reflection will ask you to consider the ways in which the course is meeting its goals, and for you to reflect on the development of your understanding of the psychology of language so far.

The second Course Reflection will be the online university course evaluation which is available online at the end of the semester.

GRADE SCALE

	B+ 87-89.99	C+ 77-79.99	D+ 67-69.99
A 93-100	B 83-86.99	C 73-76.99	D 63-66.99
A- 90-92.99	B- 80-82.99	C- 70-72.99	D- 60-62.99
			F <60

The letter grade you receive is determined by the numerical range that your grade falls into, without additional rounding.

To assist you in calculating your grade, a Grade Calculator is available on Canvas.

SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic	Assigned Reading	Assignment Due	
Week 1	Wed, Aug 29	1: Introduction to the Course			
	Fri, Aug 31	2: Language and Thought			
Week 2	Mon, Sept 3	NO CLASS: Labor Day			
	Labor Day Holiday- University offices closed; classes suspended.				
	Wed, Sept 5	3: Language and Thought	Li & Gleitman (2002)	Think About It	
	Fri, Sept 7	4: Language and Thought	Klein (2018)	Think About It	
Week 3	Mon, Sept 10	5: Word Meaning		Thought Paper	
	Tues, Sept 11: Last day to register or to add courses. After this date, no tuition will be rebated and a \$25 processing fee will be charged for change of registration; students withdrawing from courses will receive a grade of 'W' on permanent record.				
	Tues, Sept 11: Deadline for completion of deferred examinations and incomplete work (grade I) from Spring Semester 2018 and 2018 Summer Sessions.				
	Wed, Sept 12	6: Acquisition of Word Meaning	Markman (1990)	Think About It	
	Fri, Sept 14	7: Acquisition of Word Meaning	Yu & Smith (2007)	Think About It	
	Week 4	Mon, Sept 17	8: Acquisition of Word Meaning		
		Wed, Sept 19	9: Morphology		Thought Paper
Fri, Sept 21		10: Structure of the Lexicon	Traxler (2012, chapter 3)	Think About It	
Week 5	Mon, Sept 24	Exam 1			
	Wed, Sept 26	11: Structure of Language			

	Fri, Sept 28	12: Phonology		
Week 6	Mon, Oct 1	13: Speech Perception	McGurk & MacDonald (1976)	Think About It
	Wed, Oct 3	14: Speech Production		
	Fri, Oct 5	15: Phonological Acquisition		
Week 7	Mon, Oct 8	16: Phonological Acquisition	Bruderer et al (2015)	Think About It
	Wed, Oct 10	17: Syntax	Haegeman (1994, pp 3-9, 33-42)	Think About It
	Fri, Oct 12	18: Syntactic Structure and Sentence Parsing		Thought Paper
	Deadline for midterm grades to be posted in UDSIS			
Week 8	Mon, Oct 15	19: Acquisition of Structural Meaning	Lidz & Musolino (2002)	Think About It
	Wed, Oct 17	20: Syntactic Development	Hurewitz et al. (2000)	Think About It
	Fri, Oct 19	21: Syntactic Development	Pozzan & Trueswell (2015)	Think About It
Week 9	Mon, Oct 22	Exam 2		
	Tues, Oct 23: Last day to change registration or to withdraw from courses for Fall 2018.			
	Wed, Oct 24	22: Language in the Brain	Yule (2017, chapter 12)	Think About It
	Fri, Oct 26	23: Language in the Brain		
Week 10	Mon, Oct 29	24: Language in the Brain		
	Wed, Oct 31	25: Written Language	Harley (2014, chapter 7, pp 209-220)	Thought Paper Think About It
	Fri, Nov 2	26: Reading		
Week 11	Mon, Nov 5	27: Learning to Read	Harley (2014, chapter 3, pp 54-67)	Think About It
	Registration begins for Spring Semester 2019.			
	Tues, Nov 6: Election Day – classes suspended; University offices closed.			

	Wed, Nov 7	28: Sign Language		Thought Paper
	Fri, Nov 9	29: Second Language Acquisition		
Week 12	Mon, Nov 12	30: Bilingualism	Kroll et al. (2014)	Think About It
	Wed, Nov 14	31: Atypical Language Development	Harley (2014, chapter 3, pp 77-79, 85-88)	Thought Paper Think About It
	Fri, Nov 16	Exam 3		
	Mon, Nov 19	NO CLASS:		
	Wed, Nov 21	Thanksgiving Break		
	Fri, Nov 23			
Week 13	Mon, Nov 26	33: Discourse	Yule (2017, chapter 11)	Think About It
	Wed, Nov 28	34: Figurative Language and Metaphor		Thought Paper
	Fri, Nov 30	35: Language and Culture	Tannen (2014)	Think About It
Week 14	Mon, Dec 3	36: Language and Thought		
	Wed, Dec 5	37: Language and Mind		
	Fri, Dec 7	Exam 4		
FINALS and GRADING	Sat, Dec 8	Reading Day: no examinations scheduled		
	Mon, Dec 10	Final examinations begin		
	Sat, Dec 15	Final examinations end		
	Wed, Dec 19	Deadline for 2018 Fall semester grades to be posted to UDSIS		

READINGS

- Bruderer, A., Danielson, D., Kandhadai, P., & Werker, J. (2015). Sensorimotor influences on speech perception in infancy. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 112(44)*, 13531-13536.
- Haegeman, L. (1994). *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory, 2nd Ed.* Blackwell Publishers: Cambridge, MA
- Harley, T. (2014). *The Psychology of Language, 4th Ed.* Psychology Press: London and New York.
- Klein, J. (2018, January 19). They Hunt. They Gather. They're Very Good at Talking About Smells. Retrieved from *The New York Times*.
- Kroll, J., Bobb, S., & Hoshino, N. (2014). Two languages in mind: Bilingualism as a tool to investigate language, cognition, and the brain. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23*, 159-163.
- Li, P. & Gleitman, L. (2002). Turning the tables: language and spatial reasoning. *Cognition, 83(3)*, 265-294.

- Markman, E. (1990). Constraints children place on word meanings. *Cognitive Science*, 14, 57-77.
- Pozzan, L. & Trueswell, J. (2015). Revise and resubmit: How real-time parsing limitations influence grammar acquisition. *Cognitive Psychology*, 80, 73-108.
- Tannen, D. (2014). Chapter 10: Language and Culture. In R. Fasold & J. Connor-Linton (Eds.), *An Introduction to Language and Linguistics, 2nd Ed.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
- Traxler, M. (2012). *Introduction to Psycholinguistics: Understanding Language Science.* Wiley-Blackwell: West Sussex, UK.
- Yu, C. & Smith, L. (1997). Rapid word learning under uncertainty via Cross-Situational Statistics. *Psychological Science*, 18 (5), 414-420.
- Yule, G. (2017). *The Study of Language, 6th Ed.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.