



Psychology of Language

PSYC 336, Section 001, 3 credits, Winter 2020
T, Th, 14h – 15h30, Wesbrook 201

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Teaching Assistant: TBD

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Course Objectives:

Welcome to Psychology of Language! In this course, we will discuss how language is produced and understood by the human brain. We will cover a wide range of topics, including speech perception and production, word and sentence processing, language acquisition, bilingualism, and speech and language disorders. After taking this course, you should be able to critically think about the cognitive processes underlying language acquisition and use.

Required readings:

Introduction to Psycholinguistics, Matthew J. Traxler. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. This text is available in the UBC bookstore.

Course Format:

In general, each week will include a lecture day (usually Tuesday) and a discussion day (usually Thursday). On lecture days, I will focus on key theories and principles described in the assigned readings; I will also be introducing new material to accompany information from the textbook. On discussion days, I will continue discussing the week's theme. We will also break into groups and discuss applications of the material we've learned. On most weeks, we will examine the language samples that you will bring to class from the point of view of the week's topic. The midterm and final exam will cover materials discussed in the text and in both lecture and discussion days.

Online tools:

I will upload course materials to Canvas (www.canvas.ubc.ca). Lecture slides will be uploaded to Canvas the evening before lecture and discussion days. I will also use Canvas to share links to extra material discussed in class. Discussion write-ups should be submitted via Canvas. I also encourage you to use the Discussion Threads in Canvas to ask questions, as other students may share the same questions. The TA and I will regularly monitor these discussion threads and will answer these questions as soon as possible.



Assessments:

1. Language sample (5%):

At the beginning of the term, you are required to bring in a detailed, written transcription of an actual conversation between at least two people (due January 15th). Specific instructions on how to transcribe the conversation will follow.

2. Discussion write-ups (2 x 20% = 40%):

On discussion days, you will discuss your language sample with the group from the point of view of the week's topic. You are assigned to write a description of the ideas of the group (1-2 pages, single-spaced), due before class, one week after the discussion day. The summary should include your analysis of the topic discussed as illustrated by examples from the group's language samples. The emphasis is on your application of the topic concepts to the language samples, not on summarizing the topic. You are required to hand in **two write-ups** over the course of the term, and you may choose which week's topics you write up. One write-up must be done before the mid-term, and the other must be done after the mid-term. Note that there are only 8 planned discussion weeks, so plan accordingly. Further instructions of the write-ups will follow.

3. Midterm Examination (25%) on February 13th, 2020:

Multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions covering material from January 7th to February 6th, 2020.

4. Final Examination (30%) during exam period:

Multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions covering material from February 11th to April 7th, 2020.

Grading on a curve

All courses in the psychology department are graded on a curve. This means that I may need to adjust your grades up or down to hit a set average (~68) and standard deviation (~13). I will do my best to provide assessments that will naturally produce these set grades, but please be prepared for grade adjustments as well. When looking at your grades through the term, it is probably a good idea to compare your grade to the class average, so that you are not surprised at the end of the term.



University policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the UBC Senate website: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult me or your TA. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>) and read the University's Policy 69 (available at <http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy69.html>).



Class Schedule

Dates	Topic	Readings	Deadlines
07-Jan	Introduction to class		
09-Jan	Introduction to Language Sciences	Ch 1	
14-Jan	<u>Speech Production</u>	Ch 2, P1	Language samples due (15-Jan)
16-Jan	Discussion 1		
21-Jan	<u>Speech Perception</u>	Ch 2, P2	
23-Jan	Discussion 2		D1 Write-up
28-Jan	<u>Word Processing</u>	Ch 3	
30-Jan	Discussion 3		D2 Write-up
04-Feb	<u>Sentence Processing</u>	Ch 4	
06-Feb	Discussion 4		D3 Write-up
11-Feb	<u>Neural bases of language processing</u>	Ch 14, P1	
13-Feb	Midterm (Chapters 1 - 4)		D4 Write-up
18-Feb	No Class		
20-Feb	No Class		
25-Feb	<u>Non-literal language Processing</u>	Ch 7	
27-Feb	Discussion 5		
03-Mar	<u>Reading</u>	Ch 10	
05-Mar	Discussion 6		D5 Write-up
10-Mar	<u>Bilingual language processing</u>	Ch 11	
12-Mar	Discussion 7		D6 Write-up
17-Mar	<u>Language development</u>	Ch 9	
19-Mar	Discussion 8		D7 Write-up
24-Mar	<u>Sign Language</u>	Ch 13	
26-Mar	Cochlear Implants		D8 Write-up
31-Mar	<u>Aphasia</u>	Ch 12	
02-Apr	Other communication disorders		
07-Apr	<u>Neural bases of language processing</u>	Ch 14, P2	