

Psyc 321

Psycholinguistics

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Lectures: McLaughlin 302
Monday 4:00 – 5:30
Wednesday 2:30 – 4:00

Office Hour: any time by appointment

Course Summary: A general survey of the psychology of language. Topics will include speech perception, sentence processing, discourse processing, speech production, sentence planning, sign language, biological foundation of language, and the development of language in children. Applied psycholinguistics will be emphasized. The course material will be related to speech pathology and new developments in speech technology.

Learning goals:

My aim is that you gain an overview of the field of the psychology of language and learn some experimental skills. You will learn to replicate the methods of a series of classic psycholinguistic experiments.

Course Evaluation:

Activities		25%
Readings		5%
Midterm 1	(February 9)	20%
Midterm 2	(March 16)	20%
Final Paper	(due April 8)	30%

Activities

For this part of the course you are required to learn how to learn a number of psycholinguistic methods. The aim is to give you some "hands-on" experience in the experimental study of language. The activities include creating a voicing continuum for a speech perception experiment, creating a stimulus set for a lexical processing study, examine the methodologies for speech error studies, learn to eye track subjects for a sentence processing study, explore conversation methodologies, and examine translation techniques. These 'activities' receive full marks if you learn the task. Four marks each except for eye tracking (five marks).

Final Paper

The paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria (30 marks):

Research - comprehensiveness, accuracy, use of current and relevant research

Organization - clear identified units of thought, elaboration (adequate explanation)

Writing - correct English grammar and spelling, clarity and coherence

Your topic can be anything in psycholinguistics that you find interesting but the topic has to be approved by me.

Maximum 10 pages plus references.

Midterms

The midterms will have the following format. The first section (A) of the exam will be composed of short answer questions. This will be followed by a section (B) of questions requiring longer answers drawn from the lecture material and readings. For both the short and longer answer sections there will always be some choice. Finally, there will be a single question (C) of a very generally nature. This question will require you to integrate material and present a cogent argument.

Example Questions:

A. 1. Describe what four (4) of the following terms mean. **(5 points each)**

To answer this type of question well you should: a) define the term and b) say why it is important or give an example of its use.

Example:

duality of patterning

- A feature of a communication system in which a small number of meaningless units can be combined into a large number of meaningful units. Thus, the patterns in language signals occur on two levels.

Elaborations of this definition can include a description of Hockett's design features of language, criteria for definition of language, presence in signed and spoken language, etc.

B. Answer three (3) of the following questions **(10 points)**

These questions are aimed at examining your knowledge of the course material and so are direct questions on lecture and text content. I reserve 1 or 2 marks in the marking scheme for “something extra”. This can be a particularly well-written or well-organized answer or an answer containing some insightful observation about the question or containing some additional information.

Example:

1. Describe the distinct linguistic and psychological contributions to the development of the field of psycholinguistics.

- distinguish the linguistic and psychological approaches to the study of language
- outline the history of the development of psycholinguistics
- describe the major linguistic and psychological approaches that have influenced psycholinguistic research and theory.

C. Section III Answer the following question (10 points)

This is the only question with no choice. There is no single way to answer a question in this section. I often give high marks for very different approaches to the question (i.e., two answers that take the opposite stands on an issue can both get high marks). I give higher marks to clear answers that use the course material to illustrate and support the argument.

Example:

1. Is language a uniquely human ability? Include evidence from some of the following areas: language acquisition, cross-species research, speech perception and production, semantic memory, and discourse processing.

Readings

There is no text. There are 2 kinds of readings for the course: **1.** Short papers that you have to read and submit a page (maximum) comment about reaction you had to the paper, some thought that came to you while reading it, some association you made with other work, etc. There are 5 of these papers and you get a mark for submitting each of your “thought papers” on time. **2.** General background readings that may provide the kind of extra information that a text might give you.

TYPE 1 Readings:

1. J.S. Coleman (2006). Design Features of Language. **January 12, 2015**
2. S.E. Blumstein & K. Kurowski (2006). The Foreign Accent Syndrome: A Perspective. **January 19, 2015**
3. N. Dumay & M.G. Gaskell (2007). Sleep-Associated Changes in the Mental Representation of Spoken Words. **February 2, 2015**
4. D.A. Snowden et al., (1996). Linguistic Ability in Early Life and Cognitive Function and Alzheimer’s Disease in Late Life. **February 23, 2015**
5. S. Garrod & M.J. Pickering (2004). Why is Conversation So Easy?
March 11, 2015

Tentative Lecture Schedule

DATE	TOPIC
Jan. 5, 7, 12	Introduction
Jan. 14, 19	Speech
Jan. 21	Task 1: Voicing continuum/categorical perception
Jan. 26	Visible Speech
Jan. 28, Feb. 2	Words
Feb. 4	Task 2: Lexical Processing
Feb. 9	Midterm 1
Feb. 11	Sentences
Feb. 16, 18	Reading Week
Feb. 23	Sentences
Feb. 25	Task 3: Eye tracking and sentence processing
March 2, 4	Discourse
March 9, 11	Conversation/ Special Topics
March 16	Midterm 2
March 18	Task 4: Conversation
March 23	Translation and Task 5
March 25	Psycholinguistic Methods Overview
March 30	Task 6
April 1	Summing up

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1), on the Arts and Science website (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/academic-integrity>), and from the instructor of this course.

Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the DSO website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/>

The Psychology Grading Policy, "mixed-marking method," is outlined on the following webpage:

<http://www.queensu.ca/psychology/Undergraduate/psycdepartmentalpolices/psycgradingpolicy.html>

A full list of Departmental Policies, including exam absences, can be found at:

<http://www.queensu.ca/psychology/Undergraduate/psycdepartmentalpolices.html>

Please note that for the winter term, the following date has been scheduled as the Departmental make-up exam date: **Monday, April 27th, 2015**