

## Developmental Psycholinguistics

Psyc 452, Fall 2015  
Tuesday 11:30 – 1:00  
Friday 1:00 – 2:30

Instructor: Dr. Stanka A. Fitneva  
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### Course Description [course catalogue]

This seminar focuses on the human ability to produce and comprehend language and its development. Using original empirical articles the participants in the seminar will examine topics like syntactic and lexical disambiguation, structural priming, the development of reading, and cultural variability in language ability.

### Readings

The syllabus provides complete references for all readings and you can retrieve them using your library account. You will also find links to MOST required readings on the course's Moodle page. Note that copyright law prohibits the direct distributions of article pdfs by instructors.

As a seminar, this course requires **a substantial amount of independent work**. Depending on your background, you may or may not need to supplement the required readings with other sources in order to participate fully in class discussion. For example, you may encounter unfamiliar terminology beyond the concepts we tackle in class. Virtually all readings require good grasp of experimental design issues. The Internet provides a convenient way to find definitions quickly and the reference sections of the papers we read are helpful in figuring out where to look for further information. Finally, Stauffer Library has a number of textbooks on language development and psycholinguistics that you can consult if you feel you need background on a particular issue we discuss, e.g.:

Hoff, E. (2005). *Language Development* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Wadsworth.  
Spivey, M., Joannisse, M., & McCrae, K. (2012). *The Cambridge Handbook of Psycholinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### Course Requirements and Grading Scheme

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Discussion and participation | 35% |
| Presentation                 | 25% |
| Research proposal paper      | 40% |

Class discussion and participation. About half of the course meetings will be in the form of a discussion. The goal of these meetings will be to clarify the methodologies, questions, and controversies in a particular area of research.

(10%) You will be responsible for facilitating one of the seminar's discussions with a group of your classmates. More information on the format of the discussion hours is available in the enclosed handout. The grade will be largely determined by your self-evaluation and your classmates' evaluation of how the discussion went.

(14%) To prepare for discussion, everybody except the discussion facilitators has to post a short, two to five paragraphs long, "reaction paper" on the course's Discussion Board. The deadline for posting those is noon on the day before the class discussion meeting. Discussion meeting days are **shaded** in the syllabus. In your reaction papers you may discuss 1) applications of the findings in the readings to the real world, 2) whether the questions posed by the researchers are answered to your satisfaction, 3) connections with other research you know about, 4) any ideas you have for extending the research presented in the paper, etc. Reaction papers will be graded 0 – 2% points. The *seven* best papers will count toward your grade. (You don't have to submit a reaction paper when you are a discussion facilitator and you can miss one more.)

(11%) The final part of the discussion and participation grade will reflect the quality of your contribution to class discussions. You are still expected to read all papers and be prepared to participate in their discussion. Note that the class readings provide excellent start for your work on the research proposal paper. As evaluation is an

integral part of learning, you will be also asked to evaluate every class meeting (discussions and presentations alike, see below). In these evaluations, you have to provide constructive feedback those of your classmates who presented a paper or facilitated the discussion. You can miss two evaluations (i.e., two classes) with no penalty. 1 point will be deducted for each additional missed class. Note it does not matter how much you say but that you make a meaningful contribution to the discussion.

*Notes on Moodle: 1) Participation in the electronic Discussion Board is strongly encouraged: post questions, read and respond to your fellow classmates. 2) The Board is intended to be used ONLY as a forum for discussion of topics relating to Psychology 452. 3) I prefer that you use regular email rather than the Moodle email function to contact me regarding course-related issues. **Please use “Psyc 452:” in the subject line.***

Presentation. The rest of our course meetings will involve student presentations. The goal of these meetings will be to gain fuller and more in-depth understanding of a particular research area. As a presenter, they are an opportunity for you to develop your skills and confidence in analyzing primary articles and in presenting the material concisely but without losing sight of the important nuances of the research. They are also an opportunity for you to pose questions of interest to you and lead your classmates in a discussion.

You will be responsible for presenting one paper. Your presentation should be **less than 15 minutes long** so that there are at least 5-10 minutes for discussion. Your classmates’ evaluations will largely determine your presentation grade. It will also reflect the thoughtfulness of your self-evaluation.

Research proposal paper. This paper is an opportunity for you to develop an original research idea related to the topic of the seminar. The paper should present evidence for critical analysis and synthesis of the literature and identify a point of controversy. The paper should be up to ten (10) pages long, excluding the title and abstract pages and excluding the reference section. Please follow APA style. The paper is due on **Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015, at noon** in my mailbox.

I will be available to discuss your paper outline/draft the week of November 17<sup>th</sup>(date will be settled once course enrolment is finalized). If you choose to take advantage of this opportunity, 2% of the research proposal grade will be for your outline. (So the weight of the proposal itself will be 38%. If you don’t take advantage, the weight of the proposal will be 40%.) To receive the 2% credit for the outline, it has to provide evidence of focused literature review and you have to turn it in 24 hours before your appointment. You are welcome to talk to me about your paper ideas earlier of course – the earlier you start working on it the better.

For this paper you have to be able to research the primary literature on a particular topic. If you are not familiar with the PsycInfo or PsycArticles databases, you have to learn how to work with them promptly. Please contact the library for help.

**Grading method**

Unless otherwise stated, course components will be graded using numerical percentage marks. Your course average will be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen’s Official Grade Conversion Scale:

**Queen’s Official Grade Conversion Scale**

| Grade | Numerical Course Average (Range) |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| A+    | 90-100                           |
| A     | 85-89                            |
| A-    | 80-84                            |
| B+    | 77-79                            |
| B     | 73-76                            |
| B-    | 70-72                            |

|    |              |
|----|--------------|
| C+ | 67-69        |
| C  | 63-66        |
| C- | 60-62        |
| D+ | 57-59        |
| D  | 53-56        |
| D- | 50-52        |
| F  | 49 and below |

**Accommodation**

Students who are registered with Queen’s Health, Counselling, and Disability Services and require alternative accommodation for assignments should notify the instructor as soon as possible.

**Academic integrity both on my part and yours is essential to the success of this course.**

**Know your rights and responsibilities:** <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/academic-integrity>

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.

## Schedule of readings (subject to change)

| Date  | Topic  | Readings  |
|-------|--|---|
| 9/15  | Introduction                                   |   |
| 9/18  | What is language?                              | Kaminski, J., Call, J., & Fischer, J. (2004). Word learning in a domestic dog: Evidence for "fast mapping". <i>Science</i> , 304(5677), 1682-1683.  |
| 9/22  | Language and thought                           | Hunt, E. & Agnoli, F. (1991). The Whorfian hypothesis: A cognitive psychology perspective. <i>Psychological Review</i> , 98(3), 377-389.  |
| 9/25  |  | Franklin, A., Drivonikou, G. V., Clifford, A., Kay, P., Regier, T., & Davies, I. R. L. (2008). Lateralization of categorical perception of color changes with color term acquisition. <i>PNAS</i> , 105, 18221-18225.<br>Newton, A & de Villiers, J.G. (2007). Thinking while talking: adults fail non-verbal false belief reasoning. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 18, 574-579.<br>Hespos, S. J., & Spelke, E. S. (2004). Precursors to spatial language. <i>Nature</i> , 430, 453 – 456. |
| 9/29  | Language in real time: Information integration | Tanenhaus, M.K. & Brown-Schmidt, S. (2008). Language processing in the natural world. <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, B</i> , 363, 1105-1122.   |
| 10/2  |  | Fernald, A., Swingley, D., & Pinto, J. P. (2001). When half a word is enough: Infants can recognize spoken words using partial phonetic information. <i>Child Development</i> , 72(4), 1003-1015.<br>Huang, Y. T., & Snedeker, J. (2012). The use of lexical and referential cues in children's online interpretation of adjectives. <i>Developmental Psychology</i> , 49, 1090-1102.   |
| 10/6  |  | Fernald, A. & Hurtado, N. (2006). Names in frames: Infants interpret words in sentence frames faster than words in isolation. <i>Developmental Science</i> , 9(3), F33-F40.<br>Mani, N. & Huettig, F. (2012). Prediction during language processing is a piece of cake—But only for skilled producers. <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance</i> , 38, 843-847  |
| 10/9  | Statistical learning                           | Saffran, J.R., & Thiessen, E.D. (2007). Domain-general learning capacities. In E. Hoff & M. Shatz (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Language Development</i> (pp. 68-86). Cambridge: Blackwell.<br>Smith, LB., Suanda, S., & Yu, C. (2014) The unrealized promise of infant statistical word-referent learning. <i>Trends in Cognitive Sciences</i> , 18(5), 251–258.  |
| 10/13 |  | <b>Library workshop</b>   |
| 10/16 |  | Pelucchi, B., Hay, J.F., Saffran, J.R. (2009). Statistical learning in a natural language by 8 month-old infants. <i>Child Development</i> , 80(3), 674-685.<br>Scott, R. M., & Fisher, C. (2012). 2.5-Year-olds use cross-situational consistency to learn verbs under referential uncertainty. <i>Cognition</i> , 122, 163–180.   |
| 10/20 |  | Lany, J., Saffran, J.R. (2010). From statistics to meaning. <i>Psychological Science</i> , doi:10.1177/0956797609358570<br>Onnis, L., & Thiessen, E. (2013). Language experience changes  |

|       |                                       |   |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---|
|       |                                       | subsequent learning. <i>Cognition</i> , 126, 268-284.   |
| 10/23 | Gesture, sign, and communication      | Goldin-Meadow, S., & Alibali, M.W. (2013). Gestures' role in speaking, learning, and creating language. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 123, 448-453   |
| 10/27 |                                       | So, W.C., Sim, C., Low, W.S. (2012). Mnemonic effect of iconic gesture and beat in adults and children. Is meaning important for memory recall? <i>Language and Cognitive Processes</i> , 5, 665-681<br>Ozcaliskan, S., & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2005). Gesture is at the cutting edge of early language development. <i>Cognition</i> , 96, B101-113.  |
| 10/30 |                                       | Senghas, A., Kita, S., & Ozyurek, A. (2004). Children creating core properties of language: Evidence from an emerging sign language in Nicaragua. <i>Science</i> , 305(5691), 1779-1782.<br>Gentner, D., Özyürek, A., Gurcanli, O. & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2013). Spatial language facilitates spatial cognition: Evidence from children who lack language input. <i>Cognition</i> , 127, 318-330. |
| 11/3  | Dialogue                              | Bock, J. K., Dell, G.S., Chang, F., & Onishi, K.H. (2007). Persistent structural priming from language comprehension to language production. <i>Cognition</i> , 104, 437-458.<br>Garrod, S. & Pickering, M. J. (2004). Why is conversation so easy? <i>Trends in Cognitive Sciences</i> , 8(1), 8-11.   |
| 11/6  |                                       | Rowland, C.F., Chang, F., Ambridge, B., Pine, J. M, & Lieven, E. V.M. (2012). The development of abstract syntax: Evidence from structural priming and the lexical boost. <i>Cognition</i> , 125, 49-63.<br>Kidd, E. (2012). Implicit statistical learning is directly associated with the acquisition of syntax. <i>Developmental Psychology</i> , 48, 171 - 184.                              |
| 11/10 | Perspective taking & conceptual pacts | Brennan, S. E., & Clark, H. H. (1996). Conceptual pacts and lexical choice in conversation. <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition</i> , 22(6), 1482-1493.  |
| 11/13 |                                       | Hanna, J. E., & Tanenhaus, M. K. (2004). Pragmatic effects on reference resolution in a collaborative task: Evidence from eye movements. <i>Cognitive Science</i> , 28(1), 105-115.<br>Brown-Schmidt, S. (2009). Partner-specific interpretation of maintained referential precedents during interactive dialog. <i>Journal of Memory and Language</i> , 61, 171-190.                           |
| 11/17 |                                       | Nilsen, E. S., & Graham, S. A. (2009). The relations between children's communicative perspective-taking and executive functioning. <i>Cognitive Psychology</i> , 58(2), 220-249.<br>Matthews, D., Lieven, E., & Tomasello, M. (2010). What's in a manner of speaking? Children's sensitivity to partner-specific referential precedents. <i>Developmental Psychology</i> , 46, 749-760.        |
| 11/20 | Embodiment                            | Clark, A. (2006). Language, embodiment, and the cognitive niche. <i>Trends in cognitive sciences</i> , 10, 370-374.<br>Kontra, C. E., Goldin-Meadow, S., & Beilock, S. L. (2012). Embodied learning across the life span. <i>Topics in Cognitive Science</i> , 4, 731-739.  |
| 11/24 |                                       | Samuelson, L. K., Smith, L. B., Perry, L. K., & Spencer, J. P. (2011).  |

Grounding word learning in space. *PLoS ONE* 6 (12). (Dec 14, 2011).

Yurovsky, D., Smith, L. B., & Yu, C. (2013). Statistical word learning at scale: The baby's view is better. *Developmental Science*, 16(6), 959–966.

Iverson, J.M. & Braddock, B.A. (2011). Links between language, gesture, and motor skill in children with language impairment. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 54, 72-86.

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|---------------------------|--|
| 11/27 From sound to sense | <p>Hinton, L. &amp; Bolinger, D. (2003). Sound symbolism. In William J. Frawley, <i>International Encyclopedia of Linguistics</i> (2 ed.). OUP (e-book)</p> <p>Spector, F., &amp; Maurer, D. (2009). Synesthesia: A new approach to understanding the development of perception. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 45, 175-189.</p>   |
| 12/1                      | <p>Nygaard, L. C., Cook, A. E., &amp; Namy, L. L. (2009). Sound to meaning correspondences facilitate word learning. <i>Cognition</i>, 112, 181-186.</p> <p>Maurer, D., Pathman, T., &amp; Mondloch, C.J. (2006). The shape of boubas: Sound-shape correspondences in toddlers and adults. <i>Developmental Science</i>, 9, 316-322.</p> <p>Imai, M., Kita, S., Nagumo, M., Okada, H. (2009). Sound symbolism facilitates early verb learning. <i>Cognition</i>, 109, 54–65.</p> |
| 12/4                      | Course summary and research proposals discussion   |

\* optional reading

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## ***Discussion Guidelines***

### **Facilitators**

A group of two or three students will act as facilitators of each discussion. The role of the team is not as much to serve as an “expert” but as a “guide” of the discussion. As discussion facilitators, you don’t have to give a lecture, or to make a presentation. Rather your task is to lead a discussion of the material so that as many students of the class as possible participate. You may find it necessary to summarize some of the information. However, this should be done with the goal of directing the discussion rather than as a goal in itself.

Your team should read the assigned material and then get together to decide what major points you will focus on, and what techniques and strategies you will use to stimulate and guide the discussion. Make sure that all members of the team are involved in this process, and in the class session itself.

To make sure a discussion and not a presentation takes place: 1) if using PowerPoint, your team should have no more than 6 slides with text, and 2) the team should not hold the floor for more than 15 minutes altogether.

Other suggestions:

- Read the postings of your classmates. They will provide you with information about what to focus on and what might need to be explained in class.
- You may want to split your group and prepare to lead your classmates in a debate over the position(s) expressed in your reading.
- Be creative. Demonstrations are fun (but make sure they work!).
- Your goal should be first, to get to “the big picture” and second, to critically examine methodological issues.

I'll be glad to discuss your plans with the entire team, or its representatives in my office hours or if there is another mutually convenient time. You will find a lot of useful tips about leading a discussion on the Web as well.

### **Ground Rules for Discussion**

- Come prepared.
- Listen openly to what is said, rather than who says it. Try to understand the others as much as you hope they try to understand you.
- The person who is speaking should not be interrupted.
- If you disagree with someone, disagree with their ideas but don't attack the person.

### **Electronic Discussion - Good Practice**

- Keep your messages short.
- Make sure you have something new to add when you reply.
- Reply to the forum not to the sender. Messages to a discussion forum are intended for public discussion. If you'd like to make a private comment, email the sender of the message.
- When replying to a message please use the same "subject" line so that people find it easy to follow the "thread" of a topic.
- If you are introducing a new topic choose a new subject line that makes the subject of your message clear to all.
- Be thoughtful and generous in your response to other people's messages – try to consider what might be useful in what they are trying to say even if you disagree with it.
- Never be rude or dismissive about someone's messages. If you have any complaints about other people's behaviour take it up with the instructor.
- *Sign your messages.*

Facilitators: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of evaluator(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Discussion Evaluation**

Please comment on the following aspects of today's discussion and give an overall mark between 0 = complete failure and 100 = perfect. Your comments will be given to the discussion facilitators without identifying you.

1. Apparent knowledge of content and preparedness of the facilitators

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2. Efforts and success of involving the class in a discussion

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3. What issues were discussed particularly well, i.e., what is the most memorable point of today's discussion?

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4. What questions and topics could have been handled better? Any suggestions about how that could have been done? Were there any topics that you wish were discussed and were not?

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5. Did all facilitators contribute in a meaningful way?

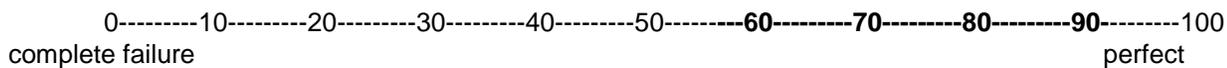
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Please consider all of your answers above. Indicate a grade for the facilitators by circling a number or a vertical mark, with the number written next to it.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Self-evaluation

Please comment on the following aspects of your role in today's class.

1. The strengths of your contribution

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2. What are the most significant challenges you encountered in your preparation?

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3. If you could change anything in your contribution to today's class, what would that be?

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4. If you worked in a group, was the burden of the work fairly distributed?

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## Presentation Guidelines

### *Content*

The papers we are going to discuss vary widely in topics and methods used to address these topics. As such, I expect that the content of each presentation may have different emphasis. For instance, some papers may have a more pronounced theoretical importance, whereas others might represent significant methodological advances. Nonetheless, many of the following content guidelines may prove useful in developing your presentation.

1. Provide a clear, concise statement of the research question being investigated (What did they do?)
2. Provide a clear description of the theoretical background. (Why did they do what they did?)
- 3.\* Include a brief but meaningful summary of the research methods. Your reporting of methods should be tailored to include just the most important aspects that relate to the research question.
- 4.\* A clear summary of what they found.
5. A conclusion stating what the authors think it all means.
5. Points for discussion. You may discuss anything you want, but make sure that it is something that you want to discuss! You will be expected to get the ball rolling.

\* Visual illustration of this information is very helpful

### *Length*

Your presentation should not be more than 15 minutes long so that there is enough time left over for discussion.

### *Materials*

Presenters may use whatever materials they have access to. PowerPoint will be available on my laptop or you can bring your own computer. Students may bring their presentations on a USB key or they may email them to me.

### *PowerPoint tips and hints.*

In an educational setting, PowerPoint can be used to effectively and succinctly present visual material that helps the audience understand the main point of the presentation. There are many aspects of PowerPoint that can actually get in the way of your doing this. Here are some examples:

- too much information/text on a slide
- too many slides
- a long series of slides that all have the same title (e.g., "introduction")
- a long series of slides that all have the same format (e.g., title & bullets).
- unnecessary use of animations (e.g., things sliding in from the side...)
- unnecessary use of clip art
- sloppy use of scanned graphics direct from research papers
- inclusion of data tables scanned from research papers
- bad color schemes and busy backgrounds
- "cute" fonts that are hard to read
- reading from slides (using slides the way you might use index cards).

Search the WWW for information about putting together strong and effective PowerPoint presentations.

Name of presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of evaluator(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Presentation Evaluation

Please comment on the following five aspects of the presentation and give an overall mark between 0 = complete failure and 100 = perfect. Your comments will be given to the presenter without identifying you.

6. Apparent knowledge of content and preparedness

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7. Logical organization of presentation

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8. Appropriateness of visual aids (i.e., use of Power Point)

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9. Clarity of expression

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10. Creativity

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In assigning a grade, please consider all of the above five criteria. Indicate the grade by circling a number or a cross mark, with the number written next to it.

0-----10-----20-----30-----40-----50-----60-----70-----80-----90-----100  
complete failure perfect