

# ENG 341: Psycholinguistics

Spring Semester 2019

Location: *Main (Old University) Campus, Room A010*  
*Tue/Fri (12:00pm-1:30pm)*

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**Instructor:** Natalia Pavlou

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**Office hours:**

Tue/Fri 10:30am-11:30am, 1:30pm-2:30pm & by appt.

**Location:** Room M106

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## Course Description

### Overview:

This course is an introduction to psycholinguistics, the study of how individuals acquire, comprehend and produce language. As part of cognitive science, psycholinguistics is an interdisciplinary field shaped by research in psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, and philosophy. How do we acquire our native language? Considering the limited input, how do children learn to make the most subtle grammatical distinctions? Is language an exclusively human phenomenon? If so, what is it about human psychology and biology that distinguishes linguistically our species from others? What is the relationship between language and thought? What are the differences in our processing of oral and written stimuli? How does our perception of language change depending upon whether the input is oral or visual? With these questions and much more, the course will also train students on how to read primary literature and conduct experimental studies.

### Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Synthesize the key ideas underpinning psycholinguistics research and have an insight of the basic concepts of the area of study, namely, the acquisition, perception and comprehension of language
- Explore the relationship between language and brain and have a variety of theoretical orientations and viewpoints about language and the structures in the mind and brain
- Read scientific papers and critically evaluate their goals, methods, findings and interpretations and formulate a novel research question which can be investigated using available experimental methods

## Course Details

### Grade Distribution

Research Awareness Requirement.....	10%
Online Responses.....	10%
Response Paper .....	15%
Final Project Presentation.....	15%
Final Paper.....	40%
Class participation.....	10%

### **Research Awareness Requirement**

The goal of a research awareness requirement is for you to get a glimpse of how some of the ideas we have discussed in class are employed in a professional research environment. To satisfy the requirement, you have to attend one lab meeting and write a one-page summary of the presentation and discussion. **(one-page, 1.5 line space, due April 19, by 11:59pm)**

### **Online Responses**

You will be able to find at least 1 professional journal paper every week on Blackboard. There will also be an online discussion board on Blackboard for you to post your thoughts, response, criticism, or questions about the paper of the week. You are required to post your comments for **5** papers. Please pay attention to the deadline for each post, which will be indicated on Blackboard. Late posting won't be accepted. Your response will count towards 10% of your final grades (2% each). An instruction on how to write your weekly response is on Blackboard.

### **Response paper**

A response paper communicates a personal viewpoint and learning as they relate specifically to the class, paper, article, etc. in question and the ideas contained therein. For this class, students have to write a response paper for one of the papers posted on the class website **(min.2 pages, double space, due April 19, by 11:59pm)**.

### **Final Project**

You will work in small groups for your final project. You will need to decide on a research question (related to any of the topics covered in this class), develop a small experiment to investigate the question, report your design to the whole class and write up your experimental design. You are not required to collect any actual data. The final report should be between 6-8 pages (excluding references), double-spaced **(due final exam date, by 11:59pm)**.

### **Attendance/Participation**

Attendance in lectures is obligatory and a continuous effort to participate in the discussion will be rewarded with 10% of your final grade.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

Students have an obligation to their classmates and instructor to behave in such a manner as to enhance the learning environment. Please do not engage in behavior which disrupts class or otherwise detracts from the ability of your fellow students to learn. Such behaviors include arriving at class late, leaving before class is dismissed, speaking while others are speaking, reading magazines in class, cell-phones ringing etc.

### **Textbook**

Sedivy, J. 2014. *Language in Mind: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*. Oxford University Press.

### **Tentative Schedule**

The schedule on the syllabus is subject to change. Changes, if any, will be announced in class.

	Wk.	<i>Tuesday/Friday</i>
1	14/1-18/1	Introduction/ Human Language Chapter 1
2	21/1-25/1	Human Language and Communication: Is language specific to humans? Chapter 2
3	28/1-1/2	Language and general brain structure and function Chapter 3
4	4/2-8/2	Learning Sound Patterns Chapter 4
5	11/2-15/2	Learning Words (No class on the 15th) Chapter 5
6	18/2-22/2	Learning the Structure of Sentences Chapter 6
7	25/2-1/3	Word Recognition Chapter 7
8	4/3-8/3	Processing Sentence Structure and Meaning Chapter 8
9	11/3-15/3	Speaking Chapter 9
10	18/3-22/3	Discourse and Inference Chapter 10
11	25/3-29/3	Basics of Quantitative Research Supplementary material
12	1/4-5/4	The Social Basis of Language: the relationship between language, thought and culture. Chapter 11
13	8/4-12/4	Language Diversity Chapter 12
14	15/4-19/4	Presentations