

## ENGE3610 Psycholinguistics

### 1. Contact details for teacher

<b>Professor:</b>	
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### 2. Course description

Psycholinguistics is mainly concerned with the mechanisms in which languages are represented and processed in the mind (and brain). This field is particularly concerned with psychological (and neurobiological) factors that enable humans to acquire, use, comprehend and produce language.

This course provides an introduction to Psycholinguistics by (a) discussing the cognitive, psychological, and linguistic processes that underlie language comprehension and production, (b) designing a set of simple language stimuli from the previous study, (c) inspecting visual data to interpret previous findings, and (d) summarizing a previous study in the field. By taking the course, students will gain a basic understanding of the key concepts and theories in Psycholinguistics, which is expected to enable them to critically read and assess previous research.

Areas of psycholinguistics that will be covered in the course include:

(a) speech perception, (b) word recognition, (c) sentence comprehension, (d) predictive processing, and (e) sentence production.

### 3. Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students are expected to attain the following learning outcomes:

- Students will be able to understand the relationship between language and the processes of the mind;
- Students will be able to describe, compare, and contrast diverse research methods;
- Students will be able to interpret data from previous research;

- Students will be able to think critically and creatively about the research methods and major findings in Psycholinguistics research by assessing previous studies and doing hands-on activities.

#### 4. Learning activities

Lecture (hr) in /out class		Discussion (hr) in /out class		Hands-on activity (hr) in /out class		Reading (hr) in /out class	
1.5	0	1	2	0.5	2	0	3
M	NA	M	M	M	M	NA	M

*Note.* M: Mandatory activity in the course; O: Optional activity; NA: Not applicable

#### 5. Course syllabus

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
Research methods in Psycholinguistics	This section discusses "what do Psycholinguists do?". Key concepts to be introduced are: research question, experimental design, data collection, analysis, result, conclusion, etc. Students will have an opportunity to experience a participant mode by completing a self-paced reading task.
Speech perception	This section focuses on the concepts of phoneme, allophone, categorical vs. continuous perception, etc. Also, a couple of speech perception tasks (e.g., AX discrimination task, forced-choice identification task) are introduced.
Word recognition	This section presents key concepts in lexical processing, such as facilitation, inhibition, priming, lexical decision task, frequency, cohort vs. trace model, phonological/semantic neighbor, etc. As a hands-on activity, a lexical decision task is administered and its pros and cons are discussed.
Sentence comprehension	Main concepts in this section include parsing, parser, incrementality, garden-path sentence, Shallow Structure Hypothesis, L2 parsing strategies, proficiency, and cognitive burden.
Research design	How to improve language stimuli is discussed in a group. As a product of group discussions, a variety of creative ways to improve previous language stimuli are presented by students.

Predictive processing	This section introduces the predictive mechanism in sentence processing. Students will discuss various linguistic cues that can be employed for predictive processing.
Critical summary	Critical summary of a previous study in Psycholinguistics is presented in class.
Sentence production	This section contrasts sentence production and comprehension. As the sentence production processes, planning and articulation are introduced.

## 6. Required readings

Required readings consist of book chapters from Sedivy (2020) and seminal papers published in the field of Psycholinguistics; all of them are listed in the "Course schedule" section below. Readings not readily available on the library website will be distributed via Blackboard.

Students will also need to bring their laptops to class.

### **Required materials:**

Jiang, N. (2004). Morphological insensitivity in second language processing. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 25, 603–621, 622–625.

Sedivy, J. (2020). *Language in mind: An introduction to psycholinguistics* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Wen, Z., Miyao, M., Takeda, A., Chu, W., & Schwartz, B. D. (2010). Proficiency effects and distance effects in nonnative processing of English number agreement. In K. Franich, K. M. Iserman & L. L. Keil (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 34th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development* (pp. 445–456). Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

### **Recommended materials:**

Traxler, M. J. (2011). *Introduction to psycholinguistics: Understanding language science*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Warren, P. (2013). *Introducing psycholinguistics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

**7. Course schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Activity</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Introduction to Psycholinguistics	Overview Language in mind: Chapters 2–3	Reading is optional
2	Research methods in Psycholinguistics	Hands-on activity: Self-paced reading task	
3	Speech perception	Language in mind: Chapters 7.1–7.2 Hands-on activity: Speech perception tasks	
4	Word recognition	Language in mind: Chapters 8.1, 8.3 Hands-on activity 1: Lexical decision task Hands-on activity 2: Lexical frequency	
5	Sentence comprehension	Language in mind: Chapters 9.1–9.3 Hands-on activity: Language background questionnaire	
6	Sentence comprehension	Jiang (2004) Guide to Assignment 1	
7	Research design	Group work on Assignment 1	
8	Research design	<i>Student presentations</i>	Assignment 1 due
9	Sentence comprehension	Wen, Miyao, Takeda, Chu, & Schwartz (2010) (To be uploaded onto Blackboard) Mini-workshop: Proficiency tasks	

		Guide to Assignment 2	
10	Predictive processing	Language in mind: Chapter 9.4	
11	Critical summary	<i>Student presentations</i>	Assignment 2 due
12	Critical summary	<i>Student presentations</i> Study guide to Exam	
13	Sentence production	Language in mind: Chapters 10.1–10.2, 10.4 Conclusions & questions	
14	Conclusion	Exam	

## 8. Assessment scheme

### **Course requirements and grading breakdown**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Participation and contribution to class discussion	10%
Assignment 1: Research design	25%
Assignment 2: Critical summary	25%
Exam	40%

### **Participation and contribution to class discussion (10%):**

Students are expected to attend class and participate in the learning activities (e.g., hands-on activities, discussions) conducted in class.

### **Assignment 1 (25%):**

This assignment requires students to apply their knowledge acquired from class activities and discussions to experimental situations and present what they've learned through completing Assignment 1 to class. In Assignment 1, students in a group of three will develop an experimental stimuli set, which is similar to that used in a previous study.

### **Assignment 2 (25%):**

Students in a group of four will critically assess a previous study of their choice and propose a way to improve it by writing up its critical summary. This assignment requires students to use the critical and logical thinking skills developed in class. They will also present the final product in class.

**Exam (40%):**

The purpose of the exam is to test whether students have knowledge of the fundamental concepts, theories, and major findings and are able to apply their acquired critical thinking skills to interpret data and solve problems in Psycholinguistics. They will be asked true/false, short-answer, paragraph-answer, and essay questions about the things covered in class.

**Note:**

The specific guidelines and rubrics for the above requirements will be shared in due time.

## **9. Feedback for evaluation**

Students will receive (a) oral feedback on their assignments during the presentation and (b) detailed written feedback on them after the presentation. They can also freely contact the instructor via diverse channels, such as emails and office-hour meetings.

## **10. Details of course website**

Blackboard will be used for announcements and student work submission.

## **11. Academic honesty and plagiarism**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at:

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version

of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.
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## 12. Course grade descriptors

Grade	Description
A (Excellent)	Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The A grade should be reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority.
A- (Very Good)	Generally outstanding performance on ALMOST ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.
B+ (Good [Plus])	HIGH performance on all learning outcomes, OR HIGH performance on some learning outcomes which compensates WELL for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply WELL the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level WELL.
B (Good)	SUBSTANTIAL performance on all learning outcomes, OR SUBSTANTIAL performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a MORE COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.
B- (Good [Minus])	GOOD performance on all learning outcomes, OR GOOD performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.
C+	VERY ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills

(Adequate [Plus])	learned in the course in a SOMEWHAT SUSTAINED manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.
C (Adequate)	ADEQUATE performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.
C- (Adequate [Minus])	SOMEWHAT ADEQUATE performance on A NUMBER OF learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to SOMEWHAT apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the BARE basic requirement at this level.
D+ (Pass [Plus])	BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on A FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.
D (Pass)	ALMOST BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on VERY FEW learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in very few areas while responding very minimally with possibly tangential content in others.
F (Failure)	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.