

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description	The course studies language processing (psycholinguistics) and brain function related to language processing (neurolinguistics); competing views of the language acquisition process (e.g. nativist vs. cognitivist); the relationship between language development and the development of other cognitive capacities; and psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic research methods.
Academic Progress Requirements	Nil
Contact Hours	Callaghan Lecture Face to Face On Campus 2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) Seminar Face to Face On Campus 1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) Online Lecture Online 2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) Seminar Online 1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s)
Unit Weighting	10
Workload	Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	Callaghan and Online A/Pr Kiwako Ito Kiwako.Ito@newcastle.edu.au (02) 4921 6109 Consultation: appointment via email
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences Social Sciences Building Callaghan HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Main theories of first language acquisition: Chomsky's Universal Grammar and nativists' approach vs. connectionism and anti-nativists' approach.2. The neurological base of language: brain lateralisation (left hemispheric dominance); brain functions for language comprehension and production; bilingual brain; language recovery after hemispherectomy/aphasia.3. Language development; speech perception in infants; cognitive development and Theory of Mind in young children.4. Word recognition (lexical knowledge storage and retrieval) and sentence processing in adults.
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Course Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discuss the differences between competing theories of language acquisition.2. Describe the neurological bases of language processing with the description of specific regions of the brain involved in language comprehension and production.3. Explain how speech perception in infants and young children are tested and what the research results suggest about language universals.4. Construct and deliver a comprehensive academic presentation based on the literature review on a specific topic related to language and mind.5. Conduct an advanced literature review on sentence processing and cognitive disorder and summarise the findings in a succinct manner.6. Apply your knowledge of the research process to contribute to a research project
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Course Materials	Required Reading: Textbook: Language in Mind: An introduction of Psycholinguistics Author: Julie Sedivy Publisher: Sinauer https://www.vitalsource.com/products/language-in-mind-julie-sedivy-v9781605358369 Hard copies are available in the UON Library Other course materials will be provided on the Canvas website.
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SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Readings	Learning Activity
1	26 Feb	Language Science: Origin of Human Language & Language Evolution	Sedivy: Ch1 & 2	Discussion: Human language vs. animal communication
2	4 Mar	Language and Brain: Williams syndrome, Specific Language Impairment, and Aphasia	Sedivy: Ch3	Discussion: What do we learn from developmental disorders and brain damage?
3	11 Mar	Learning Sound Patterns: Consonants & Vowels Perception of Speech Categories	Sedivy: Ch4	Explain how you pronounce your name. Mini-experiment: finding your categorical boundaries
4	18 Mar	Learning Words: How children learn labels for objects	Sedivy: Ch5	Discuss the stages of language emergence and examples of children's word learning strategies In-class review for Quiz 1
5	25 Mar	Learning Grammar: How children learn the structure of sentences	Sedivy: Ch6	Discuss how researchers test children's ability to extract syntactic rules Online Quiz #1
6	1 Apr	Spoken Word Recognition: How do we hear and understand words in speech	Sedivy: Ch7	Discuss the differences between theories of word recognition and how researchers have tested them
7	8 Apr	Sentence Processing: Ambiguity in sentence meaning and how we achieve an interpretation	Sedivy: Ch8	How many different messages can a sentence convey? How are we dealing with the ambiguities? Exercises. Essay#1 Draft Due
Mid-Semester Recess				
Mid-Semester Recess				
8	29 Apr	Mid Term Break Speech Production & Memory: How we plan and articulate sentences	Sedivy: Ch9	Discussion on the relationship between memory function and sentence processing.
9	6 May	Discourse processing: How we process pronouns	Sedivy: Ch10	Explain the mechanism of pronoun processing based on the experimental results Essay #1 Due
10	13 May	Theory of Mind: Audience Design, Pragmatics and Autism Spectrum Disorder	Sedivy: Ch11	Discuss what it means to take other people's perspective in conversation and how individuals with Autism are challenged in pragmatic processing. Pick your topic for poster presentation. Poster draft: Due Fri 19 May
11	20 May	Poster & Essay Preparation Instruction	Poster presentation tips Essay tips	
12	27 May	Poster Presentation & Peer	Poster presentation	In-class presentation & peer

		Evaluation	tips	evaluation
			Essay tips	
13	3 Jun	Poster Presentation & Peer Evaluation	Poster presentation tips	In-class presentation & peer evaluation
			Essay tips	Essay draft:
Examination Period				Poster Final Version Submission
Examination Period				Essay Final Version Submission

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Quiz	Week 5 – 29 th March by 11:59pm	Individual	15%	1, 2, 3
2	Essay (x 2)	Essay #1: Week 9 – 10 th May 11:59pm Essay #2: Week 14 – 14 th June 11:59pm	Individual	60% (2x30%)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3	Poster Presentation	Draft: Week 10 Fri 19 th May 11:59pm Presentation & peer evaluation: In class in Weeks 12 and 13 Final submission: Week 14 Fri 14 th June 11:59	Individual	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4	Research Participation	By week 14 Fri 14 th June 11:59	Individual	5%	6

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Quiz

Assessment Type

Quiz

Purpose

The quiz checks students' understanding of basic human language characteristics and the importance of studying particular developmental disorders and the effects of brain damage on language processing.

Description

The quiz covers the distinctive characteristics of human language, importance of understanding Williams syndrome and SLI in language science, brain functions for language processing, and early word learning strategies in children.

Weighting

15%

Duration

60 min

Due Date

Week 5 – by Fri 29th March 11:59pm

Submission Method

Online

Assessment Criteria

See Canvas for guidelines

Return Method

Not Returned

Feedback Provided

Online

Assessment 2 - Essay (x 2)

Assessment Type

Essay

Purpose

Essay assignments require a demonstration of understanding psycholinguistic methods and findings for one of the following areas: (Essay #1) early development of syntax, spoken word recognition, sentence ambiguity resolution; (Essay #2) speech production and memory function, pronoun resolution, Theory of Mind.

Description

Students provide a brief summary of the previous experimental work on a topic of their choice from the areas listed above. The essay should include a succinct literature review, identification of problems that need to be solved and a proposal of the direction of future research. Each essay should be approximately 3 pages in font 12, double spaced +

Weighting	references 60% (2x30%)
Length	Approx. 2400 words (1200 words per essay)
Due Date	Essay #1: Week 9 Fri 10 th May 11:59pm Essay #2: Week 14 Fri 14 th June 11:59pm
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	See Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online

Assessment 3 - Poster Presentation

Assessment Type	Exhibition / Poster
Purpose	The poster presentation provides students with opportunities to learn how to lay out the information effectively for a brief research presentation and how to succinctly report their ideas for future research.
Description	The poster presentation will include a literature review on the selected topic, criticisms of previous experimental/psycholinguistic research, and potential solutions for the identified problems. In the peer evaluation, each student will be asked to provide a constructive comment on the peer presentations.
Weighting	20%
Length	Approximately 5 minutes
Due Date	Draft: Week 10 Fri 19 th May 11:59pm Presentation & peer evaluation: In class in Weeks 12 and 13 Final submission: Week 14 Fri 14 th June 11:59
Submission Method	Online and in class
Assessment Criteria	See Canvas
Return Method	Not Returned
Feedback Provided	Online

Assessment 4 - Research Participation

Assessment Type	Participation
Purpose	This assignment aims to provide opportunities for students to experience research activities outside the classroom, as a study participant, an assistant for a research task, or an audience of a research presentation.
Description	Students are required to earn 5% of their course credit by participating in ongoing research OR by submitting a summary of a talk from the Linguistics Seminar Series. Follow the instructions on "Learning about Research Outside Classroom" posted on Canvas. Afterward, students will upload the form signed by a researcher by the end of Week 14.
Weighting	5%
Length	Approximately 60min
Due Date	By week 14 Fri 14 th June 11:59
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	NA
Return Method	Not Returned
Feedback Provided	No Feedback

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.

65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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