

PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE
Guidelines for Success
& Syllabus (below)

Nora Isacoff (nisacoff@ruccs.rutgers.edu)

Classes: May 31-July 7. Attendance is mandatory!

Grades:

1/3 Midterm (June 16)

1/3 Final (July 7)

1/3 Classwork & Online Participation (See below)

Make sure to bring your book to every class!

A hybrid class provides the best of both worlds! We'll come together twice a week for lecture and discussion, and in between you'll have a chance to do some activities on your own and have online discussions on the message board. I've laid out all of your responsibilities very carefully in the syllabus, so you will always know exactly what you need to do before each class.

A third of your grade comes from classwork and online participation. Everyone should receive full credit for this third, provided you follow some simple guidelines.

There are three components to this third, and you must complete **every part** for **every one** of the 10 non-exam classes. (You do NOT have these requirements for the dates of the midterm and the final.)

1. **Classwork:** During each class, I will give you questions that relate to the readings and the lectures. You will work in groups of 3-4 to answer these questions, although each person must write down answers on his/her own sheet of paper, and then we will come back together as a group to go over the answers and I hope, have meaningful discussions about them. At the end of each class, I will collect your answers and award you either a Pass (100%) if you reasonably attempted all questions or Fail (0%) if you did not answer all questions or did not hand in any answers. I will hand back your answers at the start of the following class, so you can use them to review.
2. **Reading threads:** For each class, I will post a thread with the title and date of that day's class, as per the syllabus. By 10 a.m. BEFORE the start of the class, you must come up with three discussion questions. Alternatively, you may answer other class members' discussion questions. (Or you may do some combination of the two, as long as you make three points in all.) Please refer to the Reading Threads guidelines under Resources to make sure you get full credit and, more importantly, that these threads are productive and interesting for all.
3. **Online Assignment threads:** For the online half of the class, you will do an activity (either watching a film or completing an online experiment) corresponding to each class' theme. You will NOT be graded on how you do on the experiments themselves.

In fact, I won't even see your results! Rather, you will receive credit for posting meaningfully to the thread corresponding to each online activity, as per the syllabus. Please refer to the Online Assignment Threads guidelines under Resources.

Please be aware of the **Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy**:
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

In Summary:

1. No cheating. (If you do the readings and come to class, you will have no problem doing very well, so there is no need to cheat.)
2. No posting any of my notes, questions, or exams online. (This is illegal and counts as cheating!)

Absence Policy:

Please let me know as soon as possible if you will not be able to attend a class or will not be able to complete an online component by the deadline. Excused absences include religious observances, serious illness (confirmed by a doctor's note), or a serious family emergency (excused by the Dean of your college). Classwork, online participation, and exams can only be made up for these reasons, and only if reasonable notice is given.

Extra Help:

I do not have specific office hours, but I am always more than happy to meet with you outside of class. We can meet in my office Psych115 or my lab Psych114, on Busch Campus. Alternatively, we can meet right after class on College Ave. Please email me if you have any questions or would like to set up a time to meet.

I will check the online threads once a day. If you have questions that are not time-sensitive and that you think might interest others, feel free to post in those threads. However, **if you have a question that requires an immediate response (or a personal question), please email me.** I check my email about every 5 seconds, so that's your best bet.

Extra Credit:

You can participate in select experiments for 1 extra credit point added to your final grade per experiment, up to 5 for the semester. I will let you know as these arise, and you will need to let me know if you have participated.

I will also offer some extra credit questions on the exams.

PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE SYLLABUS

(Main Ideas Of Each Lecture + Reading Assignments + Online Assignment)

The readings must be done by the date listed, and you must have posted and/or answered 3 discussion questions on the corresponding thread by 10 a.m. on the day listed.

The online assignments must be done and you must have posted to the corresponding thread BY10 a.m. on the day listed.

May 31:

Introduction

Evidence that language is an instinct

Children's acquisition & poverty of the stimulus

Pidgins/Creoles

Evidence of modularity

Language disorders

Readings: Ch. 1, 2 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Make sure you can login into the course website. Click on "thread" and then go to the "introduction thread". Inside, introduce yourself, give your major, explain your interest in the psychology of language, and tell us if there is anything else you're doing this summer. Threads will be YOUR place to have discussions, so feel free to write back to each other if someone says something of interest.

June 2:

Language & Thought

Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Mentalese and the Representational Theory of Mind

Readings: Ch. 3 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Watch the "Colorless Green Ideas" video, located TBA. Respond to Colorless Green Ideas thread.

June 7:

Generative Grammar (Syntax)

Markov Model

Phrase Structure

X-bar Theory

Principles & Parameters

Readings: Ch. 4 & post in thread

Online Assignment: In the Syntax thread you will find some basic syntax problems. Work through them and answer the prompts given in the thread.

June 9:

Morphology

Regular & irregular forms

Word acquisition

The Scandal of Induction

Whole Object Bias

Basic Level

Mutual Exclusivity

Phonology

Phonology vs. phonetics

Structure of phonemes

Coarticulation

Readings: Ch. 5, 6 & post in thread

Online Assignment: There are 3 resources associated with these readings, all located in the Resources section. They are

“Infants’ Perception of Language Sounds”

“Words out of Context”

“McGurk Effect”

Do the activities described in AT LEAST 2 of them. Then respond to the prompts in the Phonology thread.

June 14:

Language Comprehension

Parsing words

Parsing sentences

Pragmatics

Q&A for Midterm (I will answer any specific questions you bring)

Readings: Ch. 7 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Read the short interview on Watson & watch one or two of the videos on disorders. Answer the prompts in the thread.

June 16:

MIDTERM (Ch. 1-7 and corresponding lectures)

June 21:

Language Development

Acquisition (biological & environmental factors)

The critical period

Language Universals
Hockett's Design Features
Chomsky's universals
How languages change

Readings: Ch. 8, 9 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Do the activity described in "Hockett's Design Features" and answer the prompts given in the Hockett's Design Features thread.

June 23:

Neurolinguistics
Brain-imaging
Types of aphasia
Neuroanatomy
Genetics of language

Readings: Ch. 10 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Read Ch. 1 of David Marr's Vision & write a response in the thread.

June 28:

Animal communication
Language evolution
Prescriptive vs. descriptive grammar

Readings: Ch. 11, 12 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Watch the "How Smart Are Animals" video linked in this unit and respond to the prompts given in the Animals thread.

June 30:

Determinism vs. relativism
Ch. 10 from Harley's The Psychology of Language (under Resources)
Lexical semantics
Classical theory
Prototype theory
Exemplar Theory
Connectionism

Readings: Ch. 13 & post in thread

Online Assignment: Do the Language Innovation activity and respond to the prompt in the Language Innovation thread.

July 5:

Reading

Bilingualism/2nd language acquisition

Q&A for Final (I will answer any specific questions you bring)

Readings: Ch. 5, 7 (Ch. 6 Optional) from Harley's The Psychology of Language (under resources) & post in thread

Online Assignment: Do the Stroop Effect activity and/or the bilingualism questions and respond in the thread.

July 7:

FINAL (Ch 8-13, plus material from last 2 lectures)