psycholinguistics

Winter 2022,
Central European University
Vienna

Instructor Info —

- Eva Wittenberg
- Office Hrs: Mondays 3:30-4:30
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Course Info ———

- Prerequisites: None
- Mondays
- 13:30-15:10
- CLASS: CEU QS C503

Before we start

Covid is still around. This syllabus, both in content and structure, may be modified repeatedly depending on the situation!

Overview

This class is designed to do four things: First, it gives a broad overview of theoretical frameworks within linguistics; second, it gives a mini-introduction of the domain of linguistic meaning and structure; third, it gives an overview of questions that (psycho)linguists ask and how they do that; and fourth, we delve into a specific topic: How language maps onto event structure in the human mind. This class is quite intense on reading, but most of the texts should be useful for all your classes!

Learning Objectives

- Become familiar with prominent research questions and theoretical stances in linguistics.
- Become familiar with current approaches and methods in psycholinguistics.
- Improve your understanding of issues at the language-cognition interface through the lens of the linguistic encoding of events.
- Improve your understanding of the current literature in linguistics and psycholinguistics by critically reviewing and summarizing an experimental paper.
- Conceptually develop a hypothesis on language and the mind, and proposing an experiment (or a series of experiments) to test it.
- Gain experience and training being a peer reviewer.

Material

Required Texts

See Class Schedule. Texts will be uploaded on Moodle. Please check regularly for updates.

Recommended Texts

- For if you want a primer on language and linguistics in general:
  [Altmann, 1999]
- For if you want a primer on meaning in the mind:
  [Jackendoff, 2012]
- For if you want to understand the history of linguistics:
  [Harris, 2021]

Grading Scheme

10%	Participation
25%	Presentation
40%	Final Paper
15%	Peer Review

Grades will not be curved, and will follow the standard scale:

Grade	Points (0-4 scale)	Points (0-100 scale)
A	3.68 - 4.00	100-96
A-	3.34 - 3.67	95-88
B+	3.01 - 3.33	87-80
B	2.68 - 3.00	79-71
B-	2.34 - 2.67	70-63
C+	2.33 - (minimum pass)	62-58

FAQs

? Do we need to know a lot about linguistics beforehand?

! No, although you should know a bit about grammar and have an interest in the structure of language.

? What is language?

! No clue. Well, maybe – there is a list of 'design features', and their inventor Charles Hockett claims that only human language has all of them. If one or more is missing, then it's communication. We can discuss that.

? Do we talk about the {sound/social/...} sides of language?

! No, because I don't know very much about sound at all, and I'll teach classes on other topics soon.

? What happens if my peer is late to turn in their paper/their review of my paper?

! That would be a really annoying scenario. The timing of the peer review is chosen so that you have minimal stress at the end of the quarter, because your main work – writing the paper – is already done. So please make sure that you are a good citizen and don't hold other people up! I will provide a list of article suggestions in Week 3, so you can start early enough.

Presentation

- Articles and chapters marked with a "☐" in the schedule can be selected for presentations.
- Presentations include a 15 minutes summary and at least 15 minutes discussion, led by student.
- the presentation must come with a handout, which <u>must</u> be sent to Eva <u>48 hours</u> preceding the day of the presentation.
- If the article consists of experimental research, the presentation must follow a QALMRI format [Kosslyn and Rosenberg, 2005]: (Q) question of the article, (A) theoretical alternatives, (L) logic of the study, (M) methods used, (R) results obtained, (I) interpretation and implications, open questions. For theoretical articles, this format is still recommended!

Final Paper and Peer Review

Students will choose a scientific article concerning a topic that we covered in class. Taking that article as a starting point, the final paper (~5,000 words) will consist of:

- A short review (in QALMRI format, if applicable; ~500 words)
- A review (~1,500 words): strengths of the paper, things they could improve, perhaps any holes that they did not address, etc.
- A research proposal to follow up on the original article (~3,000 words), following again a QALMRI format [Kosslyn and Rosenberg, 2005], even if your proposal is entirely theoretical: (Q) your question, (A) theoretical alternatives, (L) logic of your proposal, (M) methods used, (R) results each alternative would predict, (I) interpretation and implications, open questions.

You will then give your paper to a classmate to independently review, and you will incorporate their edits into your final draft. You will turn in the peer-reviewed copy of your paper, the name of the classmate who reviewed your paper, and your final draft. 15% of your grade will depend on how thoughtfully and thoroughly you reviewed someone else's paper.

The curse of last minute work

Extensions for presentations cannot be granted after 48 hours preceding your presentation. There are no extensions possible for any steps involving the final paper, because that would mean that you throw your peer under the bus. That said, I understand that we all have lives that sometimes interfere with our work/study goals. They have, in the past, for me, and I will be understanding if they do for you, provided that you communicate early and clearly if you run into problems. That said, the solution to everything is to plan out your life one week ahead of deadline, and have a plan B for when things do go awry ☺

Academic Integrity

In general, *The Killers* got it right when they say "may your efforts be your own". Otherwise, you don't learn anything, and what are you here for if not to learn things? Also, academic integrity is of the utmost importance in the (academic) world. Any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, copying, etc.) will not be tolerated. You are expected to follow the standards set out in the CEU Code of Ethics; see also https://documents.ceu.edu/documents/p-1405-1. Ignorance is no excuse for academic integrity violations.

MODULE 1: A mini intro to linguistics

Date	Topic	Readings	Presenter
January 10	INTRODUCTION (zoom!)	• [Kosslyn and Rosenberg, 2005] • Handout on doing a QALMRI	Eva
January 17	Linguistic Theories I	• [Lasnik, 2005] • [Chomsky, 1965], ch. 1	Eva
January 24	Linguistic Theories II	• [Jackendoff, 2002], chapters 1-4 • [Goldberg, 2013]	Eva

MODULE 2: Meaning in the mind, and how to think about it

Date	Topic	Readings	Presenter
January 31	Formal Semantics	• ☑ [Kratzer and Heim, 1998], ch. 1-2	*David*
February 7	Conceptual Semantics	• ☑ [Jackendoff, 2002], ch. 5, 9-10	*Magdalena*
February 14	Semantics and Event Structure	• [Engelberg, 2019] • ☐ [Maienborn, 2019] • ☑ [Jackendoff, 2002], ch. 11	*Henrique*

MODULE 3: Studying meaning experimentally

Date	Topic	Readings	Presenter
February 21	Psycholinguistics I	• [Chamberlin, 1965] • [Altmann, 1999], chapter 1 • ☑ [Gibson and Fedorenko, 2013] • [Mook, 1983] (recommended)	*Angarika*
February 28	Psycholinguistics II	• [Arunachalam, 2013] • ☑ [Matlock and Winter, 2015]	*Maria*

MODULE 4: Events in language and the mind

Date	Topic	Readings	Presenter
March 7	From events to language	• ☑ [Von Stutterheim et al., 2012] • ☐ [Bunger et al., 2013]	*Elena*
March 14	From language to events	• Handout on being a peer reviewer • ☐ [Barner et al., 2008] • ☐ [Wittenberg and Levy, 2017]	Final Paper Due to Peer Reviewer

| March 21 | Language-mediated (event) perception | • [Ünal et al., 2021]
• ☑ [Fausey and Boroditsky, 2011]
• ☑ [Papafragou et al., 2008] | *Stephania Shabnam*
Peer Review Due |
| March 28 | CONCLUSION | | Final Paper Due |

✻ References

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[Wittenberg and Levy, 2017] Wittenberg, E. and Levy, R. (2017). If you want a quick kiss, make it count: How choice of syntactic construction affects event construal. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 94:254–271.