LING209 / COGS209 / PSYC242
Language and Human Mind
Winter 2020

Jonathan R. Brennan

This course is about using *linguistic analysis* as a tool for studying the *cognitive faculty of language*

- **Time** Tues, Thurs 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
- **Location** Angell Hall, Auditorium A
- **Website** Via Canvas

Meet Your Instructors		Office Hours
Jonathan Brennan	jobrenn@umich.edu	Tu 1-2, Th 2-3 @ Lorch 414
Aliaksei Akimenka	aakimen@umich.edu	Mo 10-11 @ Lorch 455D
Tzu-Yun Tung	tytung@umich.edu	Tu 1-2 @ Lorch 455B

UPDATE: Course changes for online instruction, March 16

Starting on Monday March 16th and continuing until the end of the Winter term, all University of Michigan classes will be hosted online, rather than meet in person. We're making the following adjustments to *Language and Human Mind* to make this change as smooth as possible.

Note that the policies in this section take precedence over class policies described in later sections.

Lecture Participation and iClickers

- Lectures will be posted as videos to Canvas (lectures are not live-streamed)
- Each lecture will be posted as an *Assignment* and a link will be provided on the syllabus
- You are expected to watch the lecture videos on the date indicated on the syllabus

- Each lecture will include 3 or more short questions, just like the iClicker questions we have already been using. The Canvas versions of these are called **iCQs** or iClicker questions.
- When such a question is posed, please pause the video and provide your answer on Canvas under the appropriate question in the *Assignment* for that lecture.
- There will be a dedicated *Discussion* thread for each lecture. Please post any questions to the appropriate Discussion thread.

Section Participation

- Note that we will be working all together to make section meetings as effective as possible; **we may update our approach based on feedback!**
- Sections will be conducted at their usual times via the *Chat* component of Canvas
- Your GSI will post review materials and worksheets prior to your section meeting
- You can participate in section by reviewing the materials, completing the worksheet, asking questions and interacting with your peers.

Assignments: RQs and Problem Sets

- RQs and problem sets are unchanged.
- These assignments are submitted via Canvas on the dates and times indicated on the Syllabus below.

Exams

- Exam 2 (March 31) and the final exam (April 23) will be administered online via Canvas
- You will be permitted to take the exam at any time during the date indicated on the syllabus (e.g. 12:01 am to 11:59 pm on Mar 31). Each exam will be time-limited to 1.5 hours and you must complete the exam in the alotted time.
- If notes are allowed, this will be indicated in the review sheet for each exam.
- You are expected to take the exam by yourself and to not discuss exam contents with any other students in the course until after the exam period has ended

Office Hours

- Office hours and other appointments will be hosted via BlueJeans
- You can join a meeting during office hours, or at another time you have scheduled, by clicking on one of the following links:
    - Brennan: join office hours
    - Tung: join office hours

– Akimenka: join office hours

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the "cognitive revolution" and its impact on the contemporary study of language. The course reviews the shift away from speech behavior or "languages" as the object of inquiry to the experimental and theoretical study of the cognitive mechanisms underlying our unique human capacity for language, the exercise of which permeates virtually every aspect of human life, including what you are now doing! In every household, all of the children, barring pathology — but none of the dogs, cats or other organisms (nor the inanimate objects!) — acquire the language spoken (or signed) by the adults. There is some biological property of humans that makes this feat possible. What do we know when we know a language, and what does it mean to say that humans have an innate capacity for language?

Course Readings

There are two books for this course:

LU: Adger, David *Language Unlimited* 2019: Oxford University Press (ISBN: 9780198828099)

EoL: Anderson, Catherine *Essentials of Linguistics*, OER Open access online textbook (CC-BY-SA 4.0): https://essentialsoflinguistics.pressbooks.com

Additional course readings come from various online sources, including:

SEP: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: https://plato.stanford.edu

All other readings can be accessed by following the links in the syllabus

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Assignments & Grading

Assignments, Exams, & Grading

(30%) Problem Sets

Students complete five problem sets throughout the term. These assignments allow you to practice the skills of linguistic analysis that we learn in class.

Problem are posted, and submitted, on Canvas under *Assignments*.

Problem sets submitted within 1 week of the deadline will receive half credit. Problem sets received after 1 week of the deadline will not receive any credit. The lowest problem set grade will be dropped from the final grade calculation.

(30%) Exams

There are three exams in the course. This includes a **final exam on April 23rd**. The exams are a mix of multiple choice and short-answer questions. The exams will draw on any material that has been discussed so far in the class (that is, they are cumulative.) Review sheets indicating the material tested on each exam will be provided in advance.

(30%) Readings & RQs

Readings for each class are posted on the syllabus. Please come to class prepared to talk about the readings.

Readings will come the textbooks (**LU**, **EoL**), or from websites and journal articles that are linked from the syllabus.

All readings have two **reading questions (RQs)** that you complete on cavas *prior to class.* RQs are posted on Canvas under *Assignments.* Note that simply doing each RQ will count for 50% of your RQ grade; the quality of your answers counts for the remainder. (For example, if you answer one RQ question out of two incorrectly, then you receive a 75%! for that assignment.)

RQs should be submitted no later than 10am on the date indicated on the syllabus. Late RQs will not receive credit.

Up to four RQs can be missed without penalty.

(10%) Participation and iClicker questions

All students are expected to complete the readings before class and to actively contribute to discussions.

The lectures include **iClicker questions**; completing these questions count towards 5% of your final grade. These questions can be answered by any internet-enabled device: https://lsa.umich.edu/technology-services/services/classroom-support-training/iclicker.html. You must answer at least 2/3 of the questions per class to earn full participation credit.

The LSA student guide for iClickers can be found here by clicking on this link.

The remainder of your participation grade comes from active engagement from in-class activities and/or the online discussion forum.

A forum on Canvas is maintained for students to post questions and comments about the assignments and to continue the discussion outside of the classroom. Students are encouraged to post to the forum and to respond to posts by your fellow students.

Three lecture meetings can be missed without penalty. (This is the samea as saying that you can skip iClicker questions from three lectures). You can miss one section meeting without penalty. No documentation is required under this

policy. Absences due to representing the university in an official capacity, or due to conflicts with religious holidays, are accommodated without penalty so long as appropriate documentation is provided. More details are available by the Newnan Academic Advising Center.

All students are expected to meet with the professor or one of the GSIs at least one time during the term.

Grading Scale

	A	B	C	D	F
+	97-99	87-89	77-79	67-69	
	93-96	83-86	73-76	63-67	<60
-	90-92	80-82	70-72	60-62	

Course Schedule

- Asterisk (*) indicates a *required reading*
- Lectures are recorded and area accessed under **Lecture Recordings** on Canvas

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
		UNIT 1	
1	Jan 9	Introduction	
2	Jan 14	Ways of knowing	**RQ1** *LU Ch. 1 *Chater et al. 2015 *Introduction* SEP *Rationalism vs. Empiricism*
	Jan 16	Behaviorism	**RQ2** *LU Ch. 2 *SEP *Behaviorism* *Marler 1991 *The instinct to learn* Watson 1913 *Psychology as the behaviorist views it*
3	Jan 21	A cognitive revolution	**RQ3** *LU Ch, 4 *Miller 2003 *The cognitive revolution: A personal history* *SEP *Innateness & Language* sec. 1 Chomsky 1959 *A review of B.F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior*
	Jan 23	Animals & language	**RQ4**

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
			*LU pages 159–162
			**What do talking ape studies really tell us?* (Slate article)
			*Epstein 2016 *Nurture is natural too*
			Tomasello 2017 *What did we learn from the ape language studies?*
			Problem Set 1 due Jan 24th
4	Jan 28	Computers & language	**RQ5**
			*LU Ch. 8
			*OpenAI *Language Models* website
			Marcus 2018
	Jan 30	Language & thought	**RQ6**
			*Boroditsky 2001 *Does Language Shape Thought?*
			*January & Kako 2007 *Reply to Boroditsky*
5	Feb 4	**Unit 1 Exam**	
		UNIT 2	
	Feb 6	Phonetics **NO LECTURE**	LingSpace Ep. 12 (9 min)
		WATCH VIDEO LECTURES	LingSpace Ep. 20 (12 min)
			LingSpace Ep. 27 (10 min)
			Video Lecture Questions
			(Tip: Use this website to see how articulators work together for different sounds!)
			RQ7
			*EoL 2.1-2.8
			**IPA Chart with Sounds*
6	Feb 11	Phonetics & variability	**RQ8**
			*EoL 3.1-3.6
			*Bouavichith et al. 2019 *Perceptual influences*
	Feb 13	Phonological structure	**RQ9**
			*EoL 4.1-4.2
			Problem Set 2 due Feb 14th
7	Feb 18	Phonological analysis	**RQ10**
			*LU Ch. 5 through p. 103
			*LU Ch. 6 through p. 136
			*EoL 4.3-4.5
	Feb 20	CANCELLED	**RQ11**
			*LU Ch. 5 p. 103-end
			*EoL 6.1-6.2

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
8	Feb 25	Morphological structure	**RQ12**
			*EoL 6.3-6.5
			**The hierarchical structure of words*
	Feb 27	Morphological analysis	**No RQ**
			Review EoL 6.1-6.5
			Problem Set 3 due Feb 28th
9	Mar 3	**Winter Break**	
	Mar 5	**Winter Break**	
10	Mar 10	Syntax and constituents	**RQ14**
			* Sentence Patterns of Language pp. 76-87
			EoL 7.1, 7.3
	Mar 12	CANCELLED	**RQ15** (optional)
			*Sentence Patterns of Language pp. 87-109
11	Mar 17	Syntactic analysis	**RQ16**
			*Sentence Patterns of Language pp. 109-119
	Mar 19	Syntax & dependencies	**RQ17**
			* LU Ch. 7
		no sections this week	
20	Mar 24	Semantics & words	~~RQ18~~
			*Elbourne: Definitions
			*Elbourne: Word Meaning
			Problem Set 4 due Mar 25th
	Mar 27	Semantics & structures	~~RQ19~~
			*Meaning of Language pp. 139-146; 166-175
21	Mar 31	**Unit 2 Exam**	
		UNIT 3	
	Apr 2	Parsing syntax	**RQ20**
			* Ferreira & Patson, 2007
22	Apr 7	Parsing semantics	**RQ21**
			* Surian et al., 1996
	Apr 9	Developing sounds	**RQ22**
			* Ted Talk on Acquiring Speech
23	Apr 14	Developing words	**RQ23**
			* Entry on Vocabulary Learning
			* Video: Gleitman on early word learning
	Apr 16	Developing structure	**RQ24**

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
			* Lidz et al. 2003 on the poverty of the stimulus
			Lidz & Waxman defending the poverty of the stimulus
			Problem Set 5 Due Apr 17th
24	Apr 21	Universal grammar	Video: Chomsky on UG
		Final Exam...	**...Thurs Apr 23rd 4-6pm**

Frequently Asked Questinos

What's the e-mail policy?

E-mail should only be used for personal concerns that cannot be addressed via the discussion board, in person before/after class, or in office hours.

The best place to ask questions is via the **Canvas Forum** where the instructor and fellow students may all engage with the question. Posting your questions on the forum allows for easy follow-up discussion and makes your contribution available to other students who may have similar questions. The instructors will monitor the forum to ensure answers are clear and accurate.

The instructors aim to respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays. We are generally not available on e-mail after business hours or on weekends.

What's the laptop policy?

Student's can use whatever note-taking tools best suit their needs. But, keep in mind that a number of research studies indicate that students retain knowledge, and show improved understanding of material, when notes are taken by hand rather than typed. Check out these articles for more info:

- Mueller & Oppenheimer (2014 *Psych Sci*)
- Sana et al. (2013)
- Carter et al. (2016)

I did the assignment, but it didn't get submitted on Canvas. Can you fix it?

Please make sure to double-check that your assignments are submitted prior to the deadline indicated on the syllabus. Students are responsible for ensuring that their assignments are properly submitted.

I'm leaving town before the final exam. Can I take it another time?

This class has a final exam on **April 23rd**. Alternative test arrangements can not be made for conflicts with travel or other schedule constraints.

Can I record class and/or post class notes or recordings online?

All lectures are recorded and can be viewed by enrolled students. These lectures can be accessed by **clicking on this link**. Students are not permitted to post course materials without the express written consent of the lead instructor.

LSA Community Standards of Academic Integrity

All students are expected to be aware of the College of LSA's standards of academic integrity: https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/academics/academic-integrity.html

The LSA undergraduate academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. The College holds all members of its community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the College promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards of the College community cannot be tolerated. The College seeks vigorously to achieve compliance with its community standards of academic integrity. Violations of the standards will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodation through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.