

Course Outline

Faculty: Graduate Studies
Department: English Language & Literature
Course Title: Psycholinguistics

Course No.: 2201733
Phone: 5355000 ext. 24777

IMPORTANT NOTE

You may use my e-mail address in case you decide to contact me on academic issues; however, under no circumstances can you phone me at home.

The main objectives of the course are:

1. Introduce the students to an interdisciplinary field of research that focuses on the study of overt language behavior and its interaction with other forms of behavior such as memory, learnability and cognition, problem-solving, etc.
2. Introduce the students to the logical problem of language acquisition, placing special emphasis on Baker's paradox, verb argument structure, language and mind, sentence processing, language and the brain, etc.

Learning Outcomes

1. Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of the course, the students are expected to be able to:

- a. Define psycholinguistics as an interdisciplinary field of research
- b. Define Baker's paradox, identify its basic components and possible solutions
- c. Demonstrate understanding of how children process sentences
- d. Identify the role of intelligence and innate ideas in language acquisition
- e. Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between language areas in the brain and the various types of aphasia

2. Cognitive and analytical skills

By the end of the course, the students are expected to be able to:

- a. Analyze the components of Baker's paradox
- b. Employ the basic knowledge they acquired to show how children develop semantic constraints in the process of acquiring verbs' argument structures
- c. Develop a sound argument as to which forms the basis of the other, language or thought

3. Subject specific skills

By the end of the course, the students are expected to be able to:

- a. Use psycholinguistic principles to account for the process of language acquisition
- b. Collect data from first and second language learners with a view to analyzing a certain linguistic phenomenon from a psycholinguistic perspective

4. Transferable skills

- a. Apply a psycholinguistic approach while interacting with problems, issues and concerns in the field of language acquisition
- b. Apply the acquired knowledge and skills to develop insights into the relationship between psycholinguistics and man's daily affairs

5. Learning and teaching methods

Lectures, group discussion, assignments, presentations by the students

Evaluation

First examination	30% Week 8
Assignments and term paper	30% (10 and 20) Weeks 12-14
Final examination	40% Week 16

Course Schedule

Schedule

Week	Topic
1-2	How children learn language
3-4	A learnability paradox (Pinker ch. 1)
5+6	Constraints on lexical rules (Pinker ch. 2)
7	Animals and Language and Wild children and language
8	Mental grammar
9	Sentence Processing
10	From intelligence to innate ideas
11	Language and the brain
12-13	Constraints and the nature of argument structure (Pinker ch. 3)
14- 15	The logical problem of foreign language learning (Bley-Vroman)
16	Final examination

Textbooks

Pinker, Steven. 1989. Learnability and cognition: The acquisition of argument structure. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Steinberg, Danny. 1993. An introduction to psycholinguistics. London: Longman.

References

Bley-Vroman, Robert. 1990. The logical problem of foreign language learning. *Linguistic Analysis* 20 (1-2): 3-49.

Fareh, Sh., and J. Hamdan. 2000. Locative alternation in English and Jordanian Spoken Arabic. *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 36 : 71-93.

Garman, Michael. 1990. Psycholinguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamdan, Jihad. 1997. The acquisition of the dative alternation: UG markedness or L1 transfer? *Dirasat, Human and Social Sciences*, 24 (Supplement) : 807-821.

Taylor, Insup and Taylor, Martin. 1990. Psycholinguistics: Learning and using language. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.