LING80D: Language and Mind

University of California, Santa Cruz - Dept. of Linguistics - Winter 2015

Meetings

- MWF, 11AM - 12:10PM Stevenson 175 *There is no section.*

Teaching staff

- Instructor:
  - Matt Wagers, mwagers@ucsc.edu, 231 Stevenson
- Teaching assistants:
  - Chelsea Miller, chanmill@ucsc.edu
  - Clara Sherley-Appel, csherley@ucsc.edu
- When emailing, please put the string "[LING80D]" first in your subject line.

Office hours

- Monday, 1-2pm: Miller, Stevenson Cafe
- Tuesday, 1-2pm: Sherley-Appel, Stevenson Cafe
- Thursday, 2-3pm: Wagers, 231 Stevenson

Course resources

- Web site: eCommons, http://goo.gl/IS5fi6
- Textbook (required):
  - Pinker, S. (1994/2007). *The Language Instinct.* New York: HarperCollins.
  - Please be sure to get the 2007 or later edition (ISBN: 9780061336461) - this is because the original work was published in 1994, and the 2007 edition contains annotations and updates bringing the book up to date with current research.
- Readings from other sources: available online (via the library) or on eCommons (indicated by an [e] on the syllabus).

What is this course about?

In this course, we will attempt to understand the relationship between language and the mind by examining the design features of human language and situating them in the context of other mental capacities in our species as well as communicative capacities in other species. We will ask how languages are learned/acquired by children; whether grammatical structure influences how we think; and how the mechanisms of language are realized in the brain

Evaluation

- (Nearly) weekly reading quizzes (7 quizzes; 35%)
- Three exams (15 - 20 - 30%) Exam 1: *February 4*
  Exam 2: *February 25*
  Exam 3: *March 20*

Schedule

WEEKS 1-4: LANGUAGE AND BIOLOGY, LANGUAGE DESIGN FEATURES

Week 1

- *January 5* *Introduction*
- *January 7* *What can the birth of new languages reveal about the mind?*
  - Pinker, chapter 1
  - Osborne, L. (1999, October 24). A Linguistic Big Bang. *The New York Times Magazine.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com.
  - Wade, N. (2005, February 1). A New Language Arises, and Scientists Watch It Evolve. *New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com.
  - Complete the office hours poll by January 8 (Thu) at 12n.
- *January 9* NO CLASS (MW attending Linguistic Society of Am. mtg)

Week 2

- *January 12* NO CLASS (MW attending Linguistic Society of Am. mtg)
- *January 14* *Ubiquity and universality*
  - Pinker, chapter 2 ("Chatterboxes"), pp. 12 - 27
  - ***Quiz #1***
- *January 16* *Animal communication*
  - Anderson, S. (2004). *Doctor Dolittle's Delusion: Animals and the Uniqueness of Human Language*. Yale University Press. Chapter 4, "The Dance 'Language' of Honeybees". [e]

Week 3

- *January 19* MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr. HOLIDAY
- *January 21* *Language and general intelligence*
  - Pinker, chapter 2, pp. 34 - 43
  - ***Quiz #2***
- *January 23* *Design of language, pt. 1*
  - Pinker, chapter 4, pp. 74 - 89
  - Chomsky, N. (1957/2002). *Syntactic Structures.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. Ch. 1-3 (pp. 11-25). [e]

Week 4

- *January 26* *Design of language, pt. 2*
  - Pinker, chapter 4, pp. 89 - 105
- *January 28* *Design of language, pt. 3*
  - Pinker, chapter 4, pp. 105-118
  - ***Quiz #3***
- *January 30* *Case study: structure dependent rules in language learners*
  - Pinker, chapter 2, pp. 27 - 34
  - Crain, S. & Nakayama, M. (1987). Structure dependence in grammar formation. *Language, 63*, 522-543.

FUTURE UNITS

Weeks 5-6 Language acquisition and language processing
Weeks 7-8 Language and thought
Weeks 9-10 Language and brain
Week 11/Exam week

- *March 16* Course wrap-up
- *March 20 12n-3pm* Scheduled exam period

Policies

You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning. So here are the usual reminders for optimizing your performance in the class.

Attend class. You are responsible for material in your readings as well as those presented in lecture. Keep in mind that readings will sometimes be primary sources, and it is during class that unfamiliar concepts will be explained and discussed.

Participate. Ask questions and offer ideas in class

Communicate. Never hesitate to get in touch. If you get into difficulty, it is entirely appropriate to seek help. Come by office hours, or send an email. Likewise, if you are having a problem that adversely affects your classroom participation, contact the instructor.

Academic Honesty. As always, the work you complete for this course must be your own work and must meet basic standards of honesty. Be sure and familiarize yourself with University policies and procedures related to Academic Integrity: https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_integrity. If we suspect academic dishonesty, we will comply with these procedures very strictly.

DRC Accommodations. If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please get an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and submit it to me in person outside of class (e.g., office hours) within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or http://drc.ucsc.edu for more information on the requirements and or the process.

A note about readings. Non-textbook readings come from a variety of primary and secondary sources. Difficult-to-obtain readings (e.g., book chapters) will be placed in eCommons and denoted "[e]" on the syllabus. However, you are responsible for obtaining readings from scientific journal and other sources available via the library (such as a newspaper). To do so, use the full citation given on the syllabus.

Many of these - for example, articles in some scientific journals - will not be available via a general search of the web - you will need to use the library's web site or its off-campus access tools. You should read about the library's off-campus access system here: http://library.ucsc.edu.oca.ucsc.edu/services/off-campus-access-faq. This will allow you to input your library barcode and access these protected resources. The easiest way to do so is to go to this page - http://oca.ucsc.edu/menu - and follow the instructions to add the 'bookmarklet' to your browser.

LING80D: Language and Mind Updated Schedule for Weeks 5-8
University of California, Santa Cruz - Dept. of Linguistics - Winter 2015

WEEKS 5-8: HOW DO WE LEARN LANGUAGE? WHAT ARE WE LEARNING?
**** NB: Exam 2 now occurs on Friday February 27. ****

(Week 5)

- *February 2* *Case study: structure dependent rules in language learners*
  - Pinker, chapter 2, pp. 27 - 34
  - Crain, S. & Nakayama, M. (1987). Structure dependence in grammar formation. *Language, 63*, 522-543
- *February 6* *Abstraction – learning rich representations of language*
  [in class lecture] Pinker, Ch 9

Week 6

- *February 9* *Learning the sounds of language*
  de Boysson-Bardies, B. (1999). *How Language Comes to Children.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chapter 1 ("The infant does not talk, but …") [e]
  - SUPPLEMENTAL: de Boysson-Bardies Introduction and Chapter 2 ("The Emergence of Speech")

- *February 11* *Learning sounds, cont'd.* (QUIZ)
  - Quiz today will cover Pinker Ch 9 and Boysson-Bardies Ch 1.

- *February 13* *Where are the words?*
  - Yang, C. (2006). *The Infinite Gift.* New York: Scribner. Chapter 4 "Wuckoo." [e]

Week 7

- *February 16* NO CLASS (President's Day)

- *February 18* *Word learning, cont'd – word formation rules* (QUIZ)
  - Yang, Chapter 5 ("Word Factory") [e]
  - SUPPLEMENTAL: Pinker, Ch. 5 ("Words, Words, Words")

- *February 20* *Word meanings*
  - Gillette, J., Gleitman, H., Gleitman, L., Lederer, A. (1999). Human simulations of vocabulary learning. *Cognition, 73*, 135-176.

Week 8

- *February 23* *What language should I speak?*
  - Yang, Chapter 7, ("Twenty Questions") [e]
  - SUPPLEMENTAL: Crain, S. & Thornton, R. (2006). Acquisition of syntax and semantics. In M. Traxler & M. Gernsbacher (eds.), *Handbook of Psycholinguistics,* Elsevier. [e]. Read Sections 1-3, Section 9
- *February 25* Acquisition wrap-up and spillover (NO QUIZ)
- ***February 27 EXAM #2***

Week 9: Language and thought
Week 10: Language and brain

LING80D: Language and Mind Updated Schedule for Weeks 9-11
University of California, Santa Cruz - Dept. of Linguistics - Winter 2015

WEEKS 9-10: LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT; LANGUAGE AND THE BRAIN

Week 9

- *March 2* How does language affect thought? Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis
  - **Pinker, chapter 3, "Mentalese"**
  - *Supplemental:* Kay, P., Regier, T. (2007). Color naming universals: the case of Berinmo. *Cognition, 102,* 289-298.

- *March 4* Sapir-Whorf cont'd. Case Studies (Space, Motion, Evidentiality)
  - *Supplemental*: Reines, M. F., Prinz, J. (2009). Reviving Whorf: the return of linguistic relativity. *Philosophy Compass, 4,* 1022-1032.

- *March 6* Language as Tool - What does recursion enable? (QUIZ)

Week 10

- *March 9* Language and the brain: classic discoveries and classical theory
  - **Byrd, D., Mintz, T. H. (2010). Language and the Brain. In *Discovering Speech, Words, and Mind* (pp. 243-265). Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. [e]**

- *March 11* Brain in real-time: electrophysiological and hemodynamic imaging of linguistic processing

- *March 13* New frontiers (QUIZ)
  - *Supplemental*: Hickok, G., Poeppel, D. (2007). The cortical organization of speech processing. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 8,* 393-402.

Week 11

- *March 16* Course wrap-up

Exam

Your final exam will be distributed as a take-home exam - open book, open notes.
You will receive it on **March 13.**
It is due (submitted via eCommons) no later than **March 20** (3pm).