

Competence & Performance

語言能力與語言表現

Spring 2026

Thursday 14:10-17:00

文學院 (Humanities) 413

編號 (Course code number): 1307561

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Me:

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Office hours: Thursday 10:00-noon, or by appointment (made at least 24 hours ahead)

Goals:

This class addresses the concepts of competence (grammar) and performance (processing). This time the specific focus is on the relationship between language and consciousness, so we will discuss articles by linguists, psychologists, neurologists, and philosophers on awareness in language learning, inner speech, mental imagery in discourse comprehension and lexical semantics, metalinguistic judgments, and all sorts of other fun topics. Students will also suggest articles for us to discuss, which can be on any topic relating to competence and/or performance, and then conduct their own original research.

Grading:

10% Class participation

40% Leading discussion

10% Presentations (6/4)

40% Term paper (due 6/11)

What the class is like:

This class is a discussion class. All we will do is read papers (real ones, not from a textbook) and discuss them together. So class participation means you discuss: you read, think (!!!), talk, and respond to each others' ideas.

Every week somebody will lead the discussion on the week's readings, using a handout with questions to inspire us to discuss together. The questions should be organized in a logical way to make sure we address the most important issues in the paper, situating them in a larger context, but your questions should also allow us to clarify smaller points in the paper that may be confusing. You are encouraged to ask questions that even you don't know how to answer, but you are the one responsible to bring the focus back to the big issues if we get lost. You do not have to talk more than everybody else, and in fact, the more you inspire other people to say interesting things, the better. Post your questions to the E-Course system by 12 noon on class day.

By the middle of the semester (5/7), you should choose a topic of your own to write about. You will test any sort of hypothesis relating to language competence and/or performance using an experiment and/or a corpus analysis, as in the papers we will discuss. After you choose your topic, the discussions will then turn to focus on papers that *you* choose to help you with *your* project.

On 6/4, you'll give a conference-style presentation about your research (the precise length depends on the number of students). The paper is due a week later (6/11) as a PDF emailed to me by 5 pm. The paper should be about 10-20 pages, in "English", with formatting like the real papers

we read. I'll grade them in the usual way (style, logic, theory). (And I can't believe I have to say this, but hand in your term paper on time, don't plagiarize, and don't outsource your brain to AI.)

Schedule

* marks due dates for things relating to your paper

Week	Topic/Activity	Readings	Leaders
2/26	What is consciousness?		Myers
3/5	Consciousness and language evolution	Arbib (2001)	Myers
3/12	Consciousness and neurolinguistics	TBA (to be announced)	TBA
3/19	Consciousness and language learning	TBA	TBA
3/26	Consciousness and inner speech	TBA	TBA
4/2	Consciousness and discourse	TBA	TBA
4/9	Consciousness and lexical semantics	TBA	TBA
4/16	Consciousness and syntax	TBA	TBA
4/23	Consciousness and morphophonology	TBA	TBA
4/30	Consciousness and language models	TBA	TBA
5/7	*Discuss paper topics		
5/14	Your choice	TBA	TBA
5/21	Your choice	TBA	TBA
5/28	Your choice	TBA	TBA
6/4	*Presentations [last class]		
6/11	*TERM PAPER DUE		

Readings (full list to be announced when ready)

Arbib, M. A. (2001). Co-evolution of human consciousness and language. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 929(1), 195-220.