

Linguistics 321: Bilingualism

Spring 2016

Class time and place: Monday/Wednesday, 2 – 3:20 PM, Tech LG52

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Office hours:	2:00 – 3:30 PM Tuesday, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We will examine the cognitive and linguistic aspects of bilingualism, and address questions such as:

- How are two or more languages acquired, represented and processed in the mind/brain of an individual speaker?
- What brain mechanisms are involved in bilingual language processing?
- How do bilinguals control two languages (i.e. activate the one while simultaneously suppressing the other) during online language production?
- What are the consequences of bilingualism for other aspects of cognition?

PREREQUISITES:

At least one 200-level course in Linguistics or CogSci 210 or permission of the instructor.

Note: This course satisfies the WCAS Social & Behavioral Sciences Distro Area.

COURSE GOALS:

Over the quarter, you will become familiar with the nature of language processing in bilinguals. You will learn about a variety of theoretical/methodological perspectives on bilingual processing: models of language structure, models of acquisition, and psycholinguistic models of adult processing. By the end of the course, you will be able to discuss how these theoretical frameworks explain language processing, and evaluate empirical approaches to investigating these frameworks with bilingual speakers

COURSE STRUCTURE:

We will work towards these goals by:

- Lectures and readings from primary sources.
 - Lectures will typically be on Monday; Wednesdays will primarily be discussion-based.
- Written assignments assessing papers from the primary literature
- A final project, proposing a study to investigate a specific question in bilingualism

GRADE THRESHOLDS:

A = 92.50 – 100	B+ = 86.50 – 89.49	C+ = 76.50 – 79.49	D = 59.50 – 69.49
A- = 89.50 – 92.49	B = 82.50 – 86.49	C = 72.50 – 76.49	F = 58.49 and below
	B- = 79.50 – 82.49	C- = 69.50 – 72.49	

Note: In the calculation of final grades, all project and quiz grades are converted to percentages before entering in to the calculation of a weighted average. Letter grades are assigned as listed above.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Participation	18%
Short written assignments (6 @ 6% each)	36%
Long written assignments (2 @ 10% each)	20%
Final project:	26%
Progress report	6%
Final paper	20%

Participation:

- Assessed by attendance and participation in class discussion (whole class and/or small groups).
- You are expected to have all readings done prior to class, so that you can fully participate.
- On Wednesdays, discussion of the main paper will be led by the group who wrote their long assignment on the paper. All students will be responsible for discussion of the other paper.

Assignments:

- One (main) paper will be the target of written assignments each week. This paper is **underlined and bolded** on the schedule below. For the second paper, you should bring informal notes, questions, etc., to facilitate class discussion – but you will not have to turn in written work.
- Assignments are due each Wednesday by 1:50 PM (turn in on Canvas, but bring a copy for you to discuss in class.)
- Short assignments: Most weeks (7/9 weeks) you will provide a critical figure or quote along with a brief discussion (1 paragraph) of how this figure or quote reveals a central focus of the paper being discussed on Wednesday. This will be graded on a 0-1-2 point scale (2 = good analysis; 1 = missing or misunderstanding a key point; 0 = no assignment turned in.)
- Long assignments: In the remaining two weeks, you will write a more extensive discussion (no more than 4 pages double spaced) of the critical points of the paper. Your discussion should:
 1. Identify the specific aim of the paper. What is the hypothesis being tested? What is the competing hypothesis? What are the predictions of these hypotheses?
 2. Briefly describe the experiment and results.
 3. Identify the conclusions and their interpretation with respect to the hypotheses.
 4. Provide a brief critical evaluation of the study. What new questions are raised by this study? How would you address them? Do not simply summarize questions raised by the authors themselves without discussing how you would address these questions.
- Long and short assignments should not directly quote from the paper (except when using a quote as the basis for your short assignment). You must discuss the ideas in your own words.
- The class will be split into 4 groups; long assignments will rotate through these groups.
 - Groups will be announced on Canvas after first day of class.

Final project:

- More details later in the quarter. Here is a rough schedule:
- Week 5: Email me a 1 paragraph description of an area of bilingualism you are interested in.
- Week 6: You will be assigned to groups based on interests (~4 students).
- Week 8: A progress report (2-3 pages per group) outlining the research question for a proposed project is due.
- Week 11: Final paper due (1 paper per group), 7-10 pages double spaced.

COURSE POLICIES:

1. Keep up with the class. Topics, assignments, readings, etc. may change. These changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with these changes. In addition, there is a significant amount of reading required – you are expected to keep on top of it and come prepared to discuss the readings in class each week. Don't leave reading to the last minute!
2. You have to do your work on time. Due dates are firm; attendance in class is not optional. If this is a problem, see #3. Assignments that are turned in within the first 24 hours after the due date will have a 20% late penalty assigned; from 24-48 hours late, 40% will be deducted. I will give comments on work turned in later than this, but you will receive no credit for the assignment.
3. If you have a problem, give us sufficient time to help you! If you've tried to do an assignment, but can't seem to complete it, come to us well before it's due – exceptions will not be granted after the due date has passed (with the exception of emergencies) If you are unable to come to a class, let me beforehand. Your reasons for class absences need to be verifiable.
4. You may work together on long assignments, but the finished product must be your own. Your assignment should be written in your own words. In addition, if you work with classmates, you must acknowledge your collaborators by name at the top of your assignment.

CLASS NORMS:

1. Listen and build on your classmates' ideas. The foundation of our course is class discussion, and for this to be successful, it is critical that we all treat each others' ideas with respect and consideration. Even if you disagree with another person's idea, you can still use it to build on discussion. Start from the position that a claim you disagree with is reasonable, even as you explore the ways in which it may not hold up to the evidence before us.
2. Keep sight of scientific goals and personal assumptions. Our goal for this course is to examine language use and linguistic competence from a rigorous scientific perspective. Because language use is something that we all have personal experience with, we often bring assumptions to the table that may differ from the scientific literature – and from one another. With this in mind, it is always a good idea to state your assumptions when articulating an idea, particularly when drawing from personal experience or anecdotal observation. Outlining the context or conditions in which your observation may or may not hold will also help us deepen our understanding of the material and expand it beyond our initial impressions of the topic. And always aim to cite specific evidence to back up your claims.
3. Don't be afraid to question material. This includes the material in the course readings, your own personal assumptions, and the ideas that we arrive at as a class. Asking questions will help you understand the material better, and it will also help your classmates refine their ideas. It's also fine to test out ideas that go beyond the "safe" interpretation – pushing the limits of our understanding is how we innovate and make breakthroughs in research. We'll use these guidelines to help us test out one another's ideas in a rigorous, but respectful, manner.

GENERAL POLICIES FOR LINGUISTICS COURSES

Academic integrity:

As with all courses at Northwestern University, registration in this course requires adherence to the University's principles regarding academic integrity:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/students/integrity/principles.html>

Suspected violations of academic integrity in this course will be immediately referred to the WCAS Assistant Dean for Advising and Academic Integrity. For details on procedures for handling suspected violations of academic integrity:

<http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/advising/integrity/violations.html>

Notice to students with disabilities:

Any student with a documented disability requesting accommodations is required to speak directly to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (Evanston campus: 847-467-5530; Chicago campus: 312-503-4042) preferably within the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential.

For more information: <http://www.northwestern.edu/disability/>

Research opportunities:

Students interested in linguistics are encouraged to participate in departmental research projects either through paid research positions or by registering for Independent Study (Ling 399) with individual faculty members. By giving students the opportunity to work closely with faculty and graduate students, research experiences enable students to see how knowledge is generated by the scientific community.

Research experiences also enhance students' analytical skills and help students develop the technical skills required to become independent contributors to the academic community. It is envisioned that research experiences will give students a sense of the excitement of discovery and an appreciation for the creativity associated with scientific inquiry. Guidelines for independent study projects are given at:

<http://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/programs/independent.html>.

For information on current research opportunities in linguistics, we recommend that you contact either the faculty in your area of interest or submit an inquiry online (NetID required):

<http://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/programs/research.html>

For more research opportunities and current news on undergraduate research at Northwestern:

<http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/>

<http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/advising/research/index.html>

<http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/advising/research/research/>

Tentative Course Schedule

Readings are subject to change – see Canvas for notifications.

* Note: due to a holiday on Monday, 3/28, the first course for this class will be on Tuesday, 3/29.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment due
1	3/29*	Intro, knowledge of multiple languages		
	3/30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSA bilingualism FAQs • “Reading a scientific article” 	
2	4/4	Early language acquisition		
	4/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Nicoladis (2012)</u> • Kuhl et al. 1992 	Long written (group 1) Short written (groups 2,3,4)
3	4/11	Speech comprehension		
	4/13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Midgley et al. (2011)</u> • Morford et al. (2011) • ERP background: Kaan (2007) 	Long written (group 2) Short written (groups 1,3,4)
4	4/18	Speech production		
	4/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pyers et al. (2009)</u> • Linck et al. (2009) 	Long written (group 3) Short written (groups 1,2,4)
5	4/25	Codeswitching and language control		Paragraph: Final project topic
	4/27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Meuter and Allport (1999)</u> • Gollan et al. (2014) 	Long written (group 4) Short written (groups 1,2,3)
6	5/2	Cognitive consequences of selection and switching		
	5/4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pelham and Abrams (2014)</u> • Hernández et al. (2010) 	Long written (group 1) Short written (groups 2,3,4)
7	5/9	Adult language acquisition/age constraints on acquisition		
	5/11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Sommers et al. (2011)</u> • Birdsong and Molis (2001) 	Long written (group 2) Short written (groups 1,3,4)
8	5/16	Neural plasticity		Progress report: Final project
	5/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Kovelman et al. (2008)</u> • Mårtensson et al. (2012) 	Long written (group 3) Short written (groups 1,2,4)
9	5/23	Clinical issues in bilingualism		
	5/25		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Marshall et al. (2005)</u> • Davidson et al. (2013) 	Long written (group 4) Short written (groups 1,2,3)
10	Reading week			
11	Final papers due by 5 PM on Monday, June 6			

Week 1:

- LSA bilingualism FAQs: <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/faq-what-bilingualism>
- “Reading a scientific article”, resource on Canvas

Week 2:

- Nicoladis, E. (2012). Cross-linguistic influence in French–English bilingual children's possessive constructions. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 15 (2), 320-328.
- Kuhl, P. K., Williams, K. A., Lacerda, F., Stevens, K. N., & Lindblom, B. (1992). Linguistic experience alters phonetic perception in infants by 6 months of age. *Science*, 255(5044), 606-608.

Week 3:

- Midgley, K. J., Holcomb, P. J., & Grainger, J. (2011). Effects of cognate status on word comprehension in second language learners: An ERP investigation. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 23(7), 1634-1647.
- Morford, J. P., Wilkinson, E., Villwock, A., Piñar, P., & Kroll, J. F. (2011). When deaf signers read English: Do written words activate their sign translations?. *Cognition*, 118(2), 286-292.
- Kaan, E. (2007). Event-Related Potentials and Language Processing: A Brief Overview. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 1(6), 571-591.

Week 4:

- Pyers, J., Gollan, T., & Emmorey, K. (2009). Bimodal bilinguals reveal the source of tip of the tongue states. *Cognition*, 112, 323-329.
- Linck, J. A., Kroll, J. F., & Sunderman, G. (2009). Losing access to the native language while immersed in a second language: Evidence for the role of inhibition in second language learning. *Psychological Science*, 20, 1507-1515.

Week 5:

- Meuter, R. F., & Allport, A. (1999). Bilingual language switching in naming: Asymmetrical costs of language selection. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 40(1), 25-40.
- Gollan, T. H., Schotter, E. R., Gomez, J., Murillo, M., & Rayner, K. (2014). Levels of bilingual language control: Evidence from language intrusions in reading aloud. *Psychological Science*, 25, 585-595.

Week 6:

- Pelham, S. D., & Abrams, L. (2014). Cognitive advantages and disadvantages in early and late bilinguals. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 40(2), 313.
- Hernández, M., Costa, A., Fuentes, L., Vivas, A., & Sebastián-Gallés, N. (2010). The impact of bilingualism on the executive control and orienting networks of attention. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 13(3), 315-325.

Week 7:

- Sommers, M.S., & Barcroft, J. (2011). Indexical information, encoding difficulty, and second language vocabulary learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 32, 417-434.
- Birdsong, D., & Molis, M. (2001). On the evidence for maturational constraints in second-language acquisition. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 44(2), 235-249.

Week 8:

- Kovelman, I., Baker, S. A., & Petitto, L. A. (2008). Bilingual and monolingual brains compared: a functional magnetic resonance imaging investigation of syntactic processing and a possible “neural signature” of bilingualism. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 20(1), 153-169.
- Mårtensson, J., Eriksson, J., Bodammer, N. C., Lindgren, M., Johansson, M., Nyberg, L., & Lövdén, M. (2012). Growth of language-related brain areas after foreign language learning. *NeuroImage*, 63(1), 240-244.

Week 9:

- Marshall, J., Atkinson, J., Woll, B., & Thacker, A. (2005). Aphasia in a bilingual user of British Sign Language and English: Effects of cross-linguistic cues. *Cognitive Neuropsychology*, 22(6), 719-736.
- Davidson, K., Lillo-Martin, D., & Pichler, D. C. (2013). Spoken English language development among native signing children with cochlear implants. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 19, 238-250.