# Introduction to Psycholinguistics
# (LING/PSYC 27010; COGS 22013)
# Fall 2025

---

## Course information

### Classes

Time: MWF 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM
Location: Harper Memorial Library 104

### Discussion section

No discussion section for this course.

## Contact information


### Instructor

Name: Sanghee Kim
Email: sangheekim@uchicago.edu
Office: Rosenwald 205F
Office hours: Tue 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM
(Or by appointment)

### Teaching assistant

Name: Xiaobei Chen
Email: xiaobeichen@uchicago.edu
Office: Landahl 010B
Office hours: Mon 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM


---

# 1 Course description

How do humans learn, use, and understand language? Psycholinguistics describes a range of research areas that use experimental (and computational) approaches to address scientific problems pertaining to the psychology of language. This survey course on psycholinguistics provides an overview of the key issues discussed in psycholinguistics. It covers language comprehension, production, and acquisition, as well as topics on how our mental machinery shapes natural language and how language is organized and implemented in the brain.
**NOTE*: LING 20001 and/or PSYC 20200 are helpful but not required.

# 2 Course objectives

After this course, students will be able to:

- Summarize major topics in psycholinguistics.
- Understand common experimental designs and methods.
- Develop skills for designing materials, interpreting results, and reporting findings.

# 3 Readings

Weekly required articles and book chapters will be posted on Canvas. Optional introductory texts include:

- Sedivy, J. *Language in Mind* (Oxford University Press). 1st or 2nd Edition.
- Traxler, M. *Introduction to Psycholinguistics* (Wiley Blackwell). 1st or 2nd Edition.
- For linguistic background: Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams. *An Introduction to Language* (Wadsworth Cengage Learning). 11th Edition (or earlier).

# 4 Course overview

This course covers the following topics:

- Topic 1: Learning sound patterns and words (Weeks 1–2)
- Topic 2: Speech perception and word recognition (Weeks 3–4)
- Topic 3: Sentence processing and comprehension (Weeks 5–6)
- Topic 4: Sentence production (Week 7)
- Topic 5: Language and the brain (Week 8)
- Topic 6: Language models and humans (Week 9)

We will also cover some of the basics of experimental methods and design.

# 5 Course requirements

Grades are based on:

- Attendance and participation (8%).
- Discussion posts (10%; 9 total, 2 lowest dropped).
- Lab assignments (20%; 4 labs: data collection, stimuli creation, and 2 lab reports).
- Quizzes (22%; 2 in-class quizzes).
- Synthesis paper (16%; 650–950 words).
- Final exam (24%; take-home exam).

## 5.1 Attendance and participation

We keep attendance, and you are expected to participate regularly. Participation includes being attentive, engaging in class discussions, and asking questions to the instructor and your peers. If you feel more comfortable in smaller or less public settings, you are welcome to make use of office hours instead. Please limit laptop use to note-taking.

## 5.2 Weekly discussion posts

There are **9 required readings**. Submit a discussion post (1–2 paragraphs) on the Canvas Discussion board on each week's required (not *optional*) reading. Multiple posts in a week count as one submission. Posts are **due before class on Wednesday (by 11:29 AM).**

You should substantively engage with the material and offer your own thoughts, questions, or criticisms. While summaries can be a useful starting point, I encourage you to share *your* own questions. Some readings can be more difficult than others. It's okay to acknowledge that you don't understand everything! But make sure you spell out what you followed and you didn't. You may engage with other posts, but you should reference the assigned readings.

**Two lowest scores will be dropped**. Missed posts count as 0 but will be dropped if they're among the lowest. For example, if you submitted seven posts and are happy with the score you earned, you have the flexibility to skip the remaining two posts. Strong, in-depth posts may earn bonus points.

## 5.3 Lab assignments

There will be 4 mini lab assignments. You will experience how to collect data, participate in and conduct an experiment, create experimental stimuli, and analyze and write a report. Instructions for each lab will be posted on Canvas.

- Lab 1 data collection (due **October 10 by 11:59 PM**)
- Lab 1 report writeup (due **October 17 by 11:59 PM**)
- Lab 2 stimuli creation (due **October 31 by 11:59 PM**)
- Lab 2 report writeup (due **November 7 by 11:59 PM**)

## 5.4 Quizzes

There will be two in-class quizzes. The first will cover Topics 1–2, and the second will cover Topics 3–4. We won't have a quiz on Topics 5–6.

- Quiz 1: Topics 1 and 2 (**October 27 at 11:30 AM**)
- Quiz 2: Topics 3 and 4 (**November 17 at 11:30 AM**)

This will be an **open-book session**, where you can use hard-copy course materials, including slides and readings. **Electronic devices are not allowed**.

## 5.5 Synthesis paper

You will submit 1 written synthesis paper. Prompts will be given, which will ask you to relate concepts discussed in class to topics beyond academic contexts. You **must cite at least 3 studies** from the assigned reading materials or those discussed in class. The paper should be **between 650–950 words** long (excluding citations). Synthesis paper is due **November 21 by 11:59 PM**.

### 5.6 Final exam

The final exam will be similar to the quizzes but will require longer responses and more in-depth thinking. It covers all the course materials, including readings, slides, and labs. Questions may also include data that have not been discussed in class, though all content will remain relevant to course topics. This is a **take-home exam**. The exam will be released on Canvas on December 9. You can start whenever, but it must be completed and submitted by **December 10 at 11:59 PM**. No extensions are allowed.

## 6 Policies

### Accessibility and accommodations

If you have special requirements or any issues with accessibility, please contact me so we can coordinate with the Student Disability Services (SDS). Visit the SDS website for more information.

### Submission guideline

Submissions should be made via **Canvas**. Please refer to the assignment instructions for a detailed guideline. All files should be **submitted in a PDF format**. Citations should follow an APA format style. You can also schedule an appointment with the librarian in Regenstein Library to get help in using the APA style.

### Late and missed work

Timely submission of assignments is essential for your learning and feedback. If you need extra time, please email me and the TA (by cc-ing them) to request an extension at least **24 hours before the deadline**. When an extension is requested, you may take an automatic 24-hour extension on any assignment (not applicable to quizzes or final exam) – no explanation needed. If you think you'll need more than 24 hours, please let me know with a brief explanation so we can work together to make appropriate arrangements. Without prior arrangements, late work will lose one letter grade per day. Any missed work must be turned in by **December 11** – work submitted beyond this date cannot be graded. Additionally, resubmissions are not accepted, so please make use of office hours.

### Academic integrity

Familiarize yourself with the Academic Policies provided in the The University of Chicago's Student Manual. The University's Academic Honesty & Plagiarism policy is active here:

> *It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work. To do so is plagiarism or cheating, offenses punishable under the University's disciplinary*

> *system. Because these offenses undercut the distinctive moral and intellectual character of the University, we take them very seriously.*
>
> *Proper acknowledgment of another's ideas, whether by direct quotation or paraphrase, is expected. In particular, if any written or electronic source is consulted and material is used from that source, directly or indirectly, the source should be identified by author, title, and page number, or by website and date accessed. Any doubts about what constitutes "use" should be addressed to the instructor.*

You are encouraged to discuss ideas with your peers, but make sure to write all the assignments on your own and to acknowledge your collaborators. Correctly attribute any materials and ideas taken from the work of others by properly citing them. Feel free to consult with me before completing assignments if you have any questions about the correct way to reference the work of others.

In this course, one of our goals is to help you build your own skills in reasoning, analysis, and writing. For that reason, AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) should not be used for assignments. Using such tools to generate content is considered a violation of the University's academic integrity policy. I do not anticipate any problems with academic integrity, but should there be academic violations, I will forward the materials to the College for further review and action. For fairness, I may also request individual meetings with students to discuss their submissions.

# 7 Grading

Final letter grade will follow the score rubric below:

| Score (%) | Letter | GPA |
|---|---|---|
| 92.5–100 | A | 4.0 |
| 89.5–92.4 | A- | 3.7 |
| 86.5–89.4 | B+ | 3.3 |
| 82.5–86.4 | B | 3.0 |
| 79.5–82.4 | B- | 2.7 |
| 76.5–79.4 | C+ | 2.3 |
| 72.5–76.4 | C | 2.0 |
| 69.5–72.4 | C- | 1.7 |
| 66.5–69.4 | D+ | 1.3 |
| 62.5–66.4 | D | 1.0 |
| $\leq$62.4 | F | 0.0 |

# 8 Course schedule

| Week | Date | Topic | Required Reading; (Optional Reading) | Assignment (Due) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sep 29 | Introduction | (Libben 2017) | |
| | Oct 1 | T1: Learning sound patterns | Werker & Tees 1984; (Sedivy 2008, Chp4.0-4.2) | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Oct 3 | | | |
| 2 | Oct 6 | T1: Learning words | Yuan & Fisher 2009 | |
| | Oct 8 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Oct 10 | | | Lab 1a: Data collection (11:59 PM) |
| 3 | Oct 13 | T2: Speech perception | Sedivy 2008, Chp7.0-7.2 | |
| | Oct 15 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Oct 17 | | | Lab 1b: Report writeup (11:59 PM) |
| 4 | Oct 20 | Experimental methods | Sedivy 2008, Chp.8.0-8.3; (Yee & Sedivy 2006) | |
| | Oct 22 | T2: Word recognition | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Oct 24 | | | |
| 5 | Oct 27 | T3: Sentence processing | Phillips et al. 2011 | Quiz T1–T2 (in class) |
| | Oct 29 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Oct 31 | | | Lab 2a: Stimuli creation (11:59 PM) |
| 6 | Nov 3 | T3: Sentence comprehension | Pickering & Traxler 1998; (Sedivy 2008, Chp9.0-9.3) | |
| | Nov 5 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Nov 7 | | | Lab 2b: Report writeup (11:59 PM) |
| 7 | Nov 10 | T4: Sentence production | Bock 1986; (Sedivy 2008, Chp10.0-10.2) | |
| | Nov 12 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Nov 14 | | | |
| 8 | Nov 17 | Discussion and synthesis | Sedivy 2008, Chp3.3; (Kutas & Hillyard 1980) | Quiz T3–T4 (in class) |
| | Nov 19 | T5: Language and the brain | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Nov 21 | | | Synthesis (11:59 PM) |
| | Nov 24–28 | No class (Thanksgiving) | | |
| 9 | Dec 1 | T6: Language models and humans | Arehalli & Linzen 2020; (Frank 2023) | |
| | Dec 3 | | | Discussion post (11:29 AM) |
| | Dec 5 | Invited talk | | |
| | Dec 8–12 | No class (reading period & finals) | | Final exam (Dec 10 by 11:59 PM) |

*Schedule and reading materials are subject to change. *Note.* Classes in Week 9 will be held on Zoom.