UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

LANGUAGE AND THE MIND: AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

Key Information

Module code ISSU0039
Taught during Session Two: Monday 22 July - Friday 9 August 2019
Module workload 45 teaching hours plus approximately 100 study hours
Module leader Dr Bruno Fernandes
Department Psychology and Language Sciences, Faculty of Brain Sciences
Credit 15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US
Level Level 1, first year Undergraduate
Pre-requisites Standard entry requirements
Assessment Three short quizzes (75%; 25% per quiz), oral presentation (25%)

Module Overview
This module is an introduction to Psycholinguistics, an interdisciplinary field of study which aims to understand how humans learn, represent, comprehend, and produce language. It will begin by asking what it means to know a language and explore the nature of our linguistic competence. Students will examine core properties of mental representations and processes involved in acquiring and understanding language, and how linguistic processes unfold in real time. Finally, students will explore issues in perception, production and acquisition in three core domains: speech sounds, words, and sentences.

Week One:
- Linguistic competence
- Biological basis of language
- Acquisition of language
- Experimental design and methods

Week Two:
- Speech perception
- Understanding words
- Understanding sentences

Week Three:
- Processing discourse and reference
- Language production
- Neuroscience of language

Please note that this module description is indicative and may be subject to change.
Module Aims
The module aims to illustrate core issues in Cognitive Science through a discussion of the mental representations and processes involved in acquiring and understanding language. An important goal of the course is for students to appreciate how knowledge is created in Cognitive Science. Students will learn the basics of experimental design and core experimental techniques, and they will work in small groups to design small-scale psycholinguistics experiments, and to collect and analyse experimental data. The module will provide a foundation for further study in Linguistics, Cognitive Psychology, and other areas of Cognitive Science and Cognitive Neuroscience.

Teaching Methods
The classes will consist of lectures and interactive discussions and workshops. Students will be expected to complete background readings prior to teaching sessions. The workshops will integrate discussions and research-based learning activities for students to follow up on the topics introduced in lectures. Students will work in small groups to conduct small-scale psycholinguistics experiments and give presentations to the rest of the class discussing their work. Reading lists will be available online via the UCL library site. Students will be directed towards class materials, further support and discussion forums on UCL’s Virtual Learning Environment.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this module, students will have:

- Appreciate the relations between Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology and make links between different areas of Cognitive Science
- Appreciate how knowledge is created in Cognitive Science through hands-on experience
- Be familiar with major theoretical models of language processing and representation
- Have gained a solid understanding of both the research methodologies used in Psycholinguistics and many of the well-established major findings in the field
- Have developed active-learning and transferable skills (e.g. critical thinking, communication, and group work skills).

Assessment Methods
- Three short quizzes (75%; 25% per quiz)
- Oral presentation (25%)

Key Texts
Required text

Supplementary texts

Further reading will be suggested as the module progresses.