THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPOKEN WORDS (PSYCH 362)
Tues & Thurs 10:10-11:55am,
Olin 103  Winter 2016
Professor: Julia Strand - jstrand@carleton.edu - x5637
Office: Olin 119
Office Hours: Mondays 11:30-12:30 & by easily-made appointment at juliastrand.youcanbook.me

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This seminar explores the processes that enable humans to understand and produce spoken words. We will review major research on language perception and production, and then explore more specific topics including the influence of gesturing on word production, how seeing a talker helps us hear them, the integration of spoken language in meaningful contexts, speech errors, tip-of-tongue-states, language disorders, and related topics.

COURSE LOGISTICS
Course website
This syllabus and other important course materials including readings, topics schedule, and assignment details are available on Moodle. Powerpoint slides, videos, handouts, and other material will be posted on Moodle after the lecture in which they are presented.

Classroom atmosphere
Seminars are most successful when everyone feels comfortable. Let’s work together to make this a respectful and positive classroom atmosphere. This includes silencing and putting away cellphones and using laptops for class-related purposes only. During class discussions, please be respectful of other people’s opinions, backgrounds, personal preferences, and learning styles.

Office hours
Office hours are a great opportunity to discuss the material outside class time. Feel free to use these times to review concepts that are unclear, ask for additional information on a topic you found interesting, clarify concerns, or just talk about how neat the material is.

Extension and Absence Policy
Late work will be penalized. Situations such as illness and family crises are grounds for an extension. If you are involved in extracurricular activities that may take you off-campus on the day an assignment is due, please plan on submitting the work early. This class is heavily participation-based. If you aren’t in class, you can’t participate, and there is no way to “make-up” discussions after the fact. Thus, missing three or more classes (for any reason) will result in failing the class. Please do not do this. Talk to me if you have questions.

Academic Honesty
Academic honesty is expected of all students at Carleton College. The work you do in this course must be your own. Refer to apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/honesty/ for the full policy. Please ask for clarification if you have questions.

The Writing Center
The Writing Center, located on the 2nd floor of Scoville, has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). More info at writingcenter.carleton.edu/.
COURSE GRADING & EXPECTATIONS

20% Preparing for and participating in discussions

Productive discussions require that everyone is able and eager to participate. This includes offering thoughtful opinions, comments, and analysis, and listening carefully and responding constructively to the comments offered by your peers. You should not only be familiar with the readings, but also have thought deeply about the implications of the readings and be able to make connections between individual papers and other material.

Take notes as you read and bring them to class. Making yourself identify and write the major idea of each paragraph or section in the margins will help you understand the structure and remember the major points, and keep track of points you want to bring up in class. After you have finished each article, put it down and think about how you would explain it to a layperson. If you have read and understood it, you should be able to describe it to another person without notes. You should be able to do this for every article.

High marks are given for excellent preparation (thoroughly and thoughtfully evaluating the reading, bringing notes & questions on the reading), insightful analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the material (putting together pieces of the discussion, making connections across topics, identifying the major issues the papers address and putting them in a larger theoretical context), advancing the level and depth of the discussion (keeping the discussion focused, responding to others' comments, suggesting alternate approaches), active involvement (listening thoughtfully and responding to others' comments) and good classroom citizenship (respecting others' opinions, engaging others, being inclusive, not dominating the discussion).

15% Moodle discussion questions.

Before each class (starting Thursday of week 3), contribute to the online discussion forum on Moodle. This has three purposes: to deter procrastination, to encourage you to think deeply and form opinions about the reading rather than just skimming over it, and to give the discussion leaders an opportunity to see what others are thinking about and interested in. Your posts should not be summaries of the reading; rather, they should be evaluations or reactions to it. Feel free to include: connections between the current topic and prior topics, links between the articles, analysis of the methods, objections to the conclusions drawn, suggestions for follow-up studies to clarify outstanding questions, discussion of how these findings apply to language processing "in the wild," etc. The best Moodle posts will relate the day's reading to larger, theoretical issues in the course, such as implications for models of word recognition/production and connections with prior topics. You are welcome to link to websites, news articles, or videos that are relevant. You may opt to post a new topic, and/or respond to comments of your classmates (be sure you do both regularly over the course of the term).

The deadline for posting to Moodle will be 7pm the evening before the discussion to give Julia and the discussion leader an opportunity to review what you've contributed. You do not need to post prior to the discussion that you lead. Throughout the course of the term, please also contribute speech phenomena "collected" from real life in the forum "Collecting Speech Data."

5% Week 2 presenting and discussion leading.

In our third class period, small groups of students will teach the rest of the class about a classic phenomenon in speech perception or spoken word recognition. The purpose of this is to give everyone early practice in leading discussion and introduce the whole class to some of the most famous fun and surprising findings in speech perception and spoken word recognition. See page 4 for more details.

High marks are given for being well prepared and organized (effectively structuring class time, generating discussion questions or activities), demonstrating a good understanding of the topic, effectively presenting the demonstration, and leading discussion that communicates the significance of the phenomenon.
25% Presenting articles, leading discussion.

Each student will lead discussion once, with a partner. The purpose of this is to give the opportunity to delve more deeply into a topic of interest, to identify the major theoretical issues, and to gain experience with communicating those issues to others. This requires a close reading of the assigned materials and may also require additional reading or research. In addition, you should consider the online postings that your colleagues will have made on Moodle and develop a variety of question types to stimulate thought and critical evaluation of the topic. Be looking to link the day’s discussion with larger themes of the course. The discussion leaders will be responsible for allocating class time, and (in addition to discussion) may include demonstrations, case studies, activities, debates, etc. You must meet with Julia at least 24 hours before you are due to lead the discussion with a written plan, including sample discussion questions and basic time allotments for each section of the class.

High marks for leading discussion are given for being well prepared and organized (coming prepared to the pre-class meeting, effectively structuring class time, generating discussion questions or activities), contributing to the course as a whole (making connections with other topics and major themes of the course), maintaining a supportive atmosphere (encouraging the whole class to participate, responding to others’ comments, affirming contributions), and keeping focused (keeping the discussion relevant and on-track). For more details on leading discussion, see page 4 for more details.

35% Term paper and presentation.

Researchers have been studying human speech for hundreds of years, and new information about the mental processes underlying speech continues to be found. In the term paper for this course, you have the opportunity to propose and design an experiment that could further what we know about speech processing. This will involve a full APA paper and oral presentation to the class. More details to follow later in the term.

TOPICS
[see moodle for readings and related links]
- January 5 - The wonderful world of words: Introduction to spoken language
- January 7 - Introduction to speech perception & spoken word recognition
- January 12 - Experiencing classic phenomena in speech perception & spoken word recognition (students lead discussion)
- January 14 - See what I’m saying?: Lipreading and multimodal speech
- January 19 - Finishing each others’ . . . sandwiches? Context and spoken word recognition
- January 21 - Very varied vocalizations: Accents and talker familiarity
- January 26 - Listening in more than one language: Multilingual perception
- January 28 - It's easy to wreck a nice beach: Slips of the ear and automatic speech recognition
- February 2 - Perception wrap-up
- February 4 - Introduction to production
- February 9 - Tips of the slung. I mean slips of the tongue.
- February 11 - Tip of the . . . . . . . sounds like rung? Paper proposals due (5pm)
- February 16 - Talking with your hands: Gesturing and speech production
- February 18 - Many mother tongues: Multilingual word production
- February 23 - Um... Disfluencies and . . ah . . filled pauses
- February 25 - Kikis and Moubas: The meaning of sounds
- March 1 - Evolution of speech & speech production wrap-up
- March 3 & 8 - Student Research presentations
- Final papers due at end of exams period (March 14 at 9:30pm)
Experiencing classic phenomena (week 2)

In the third class period (Tuesday, January 12), small groups will present a classic phenomenon in speech perception to the rest of the class. This will involve:

- reading up on the phenomenon and becoming very familiar with how research on it is conducted (see articles on Moodle).
- demonstrating the phenomenon to the class to let everyone experience it first hand. The stimuli used in these studies are available on Moodle. Think carefully about how to best present it and what instructions to give.
- describing the phenomenon. In most cases, this will include a description of how the stimuli were generated, how participants responded, and what typical patterns of data look like. It will help to have visuals (powerpoints or handouts) to help communicate your points.
- guiding discussion on the topic. Your goal at the end of your presentation is to have your classmates fully understand the phenomenon and its significance to the field.

Each group will have approximately 15 minutes in class. Everyone in the group should contribute equally in preparing for class and presenting during class. You will have an opportunity to evaluate how you think the work was divided within the group. You will have a small amount of time to meet with your group in class on Thursday, January 7th, but will need to schedule time outside of class to prepare.

Leading discussion (week 4 and beyond)

Before your meeting with Julia:

- **Meet with your partner.** You may choose to split up the class period (each do half) or do it all collaboratively. In either case, you will work closely together on the remaining steps.
- **Plan ahead.** Read the assigned readings thoroughly and supplement with additional reading if you find it necessary.
- **What do the readings tell us?** As you read, identify the big ideas and main take-away messages of the research. The readings were chosen deliberately so you should be looking for themes and connections between them in addition to thinking about each article individually.
- **How does this topic fit in?** Consider how the big ideas you’ve identified relate to larger themes of the course and prior topics.
- **How can I get these ideas across?** Identify ways to help the class parse the big ideas and how they relate to the larger themes. This will often include writing discussion questions posed to the whole class, but you are welcome to include other activities, including demonstrations, debates, small-group discussion, etc. You will see multiple methods for discussion leading in the first several weeks of the course, feel free to use any of these (or others)
- **Prep for your meeting.** Come to your meeting with Julia with written notes about each of these prompts. You should be prepared to discuss the theoretical issues raised by the articles and how you will allocate class time to address them. The more work you have put in before your meeting, the more feedback you can get.

Before class:

- **Read the moodle posts** of your classmates and consider how they supplement the plans you have made. Make notes of points you want to bring up in class along with who made them.
- **Prepare supplies.** If you’re doing any demos or activities, get them ready. If you’re including a handout, either print enough copies for the whole class, or let Julia know (before 8am on the day you need them) and she will print for you.

In class:

- It may be helpful to have short reviews or summaries (by you or someone else in the class) if methods or findings are complex. You should be able to sense whether this is necessary from the Moodle posts.
- Encourage participation from the whole class. One way to do this is to ask follow-up questions on Moodle posts – that lets you call on people without feeling like you’re cold-calling or putting them on the spot.
- Keep the discussion on track. If we’re veering off topic or someone is dominating the discussion, gently return to your plan.
- Don’t be afraid of silence. If you pose a question and no one volunteers anything, wait a bit longer than you’re comfortable with and someone will usually jump in. If that doesn’t work, try reframing a question or asking people if they don’t understand the prompt.
- At the end of class, offer some kind of conclusion. This may be restating key points, identifying important disagreements in the field, etc.