Seminar in Language Science: Bilingualism Across the Lifespan

Spring 2021: Thursday, 11:45-1:45, by zoom

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Summary
This course will introduce the concept of bilingualism/multilingualism and major relevant theoretical models. The principal methodological approaches in the study of multilingual people will be reviewed, including psycholinguistic and neurolinguistics studies. Topics covered will include bilingual/multilingual language development, heritage language users, language processing in typical and atypical populations, and the relation between language and cognition in bilingual/multilingual people.

Learning objectives
At the end of the course students will be able to:
- discuss the definitions of bilingualism/multilingualism
- explain the main models of bilingual/multilingual language processing
- identify typical and atypical behaviors of bilingual/multilingual children and adults
- write a well-justified research proposal

Modules
I. Introduction: Definition, methods, models (class 1-2)
II. Language processing in bilingual/multilingual adult populations (class 2-3)
III. Critical/sensitive period of first and second language acquisition (class 3-4)
IV. Student-led discussion and presentations (class 7-12)
V. Attitudes, identity, and inclusion (class 14)

Assessment
- Read papers assigned for each class and active class participation (10%)
- Submit one written paper summary for each class (in bullet points, including one positive and one negative critique) (5%)
- Submit two paper critiques (due class 4 and class 8) (10%)
- Present on a selected topic in class and lead a discussion (during classes 7-12) (20%)
- Submit an abstract for final paper (due by week 10) (for topic approval)
- Submit a final paper: Research proposal (due 5/20) (55%)

Regarding the class presentation, the abstract, and the final paper:
Students will work in pairs. Each pair will select a topic of their interest, with input from the instructors. They will find relevant articles to read and to include in their presentation and in the
paper (and assign 4 papers for the class to read). They will present their topic of interest during one class and will lead a discussion on the topic during that class. The final paper will be a research proposal. The paper will include a background section concluding in a research question and predictions, a methods section, a potential results and implication section, and references. The papers should be double spaced 10 to 25 pages (excluding references). We expect the papers to be proofread (spelling and grammar checked).

Potential topics include:
- Speech perception and production in L2 users
- Sentence processing in multilingualism
- Reading and reading impairment in L2 and multilingualism
- Typical bilingual/multilingual language development
- Child language disorders in bilingual/multilingual populations (DLD, Autism)
- Language mixing
- Adult disorders in bilingual/multilingual populations (aphasia, dementia)
- Language and cognition in multilingual/multilingual people; Language/cognitive control
- Heritage speakers
- Cultural aspects of multilingualism

**Required readings**

Class 2 Feb 11:


Class 3 Feb 18:


Class 4 Feb 25:


Class 5 March 4:


Class 6 March 11:
Papers related to your selected topic

Classes 7-12:
Papers assigned by students presenting

Class 13 May 6:
TBD

Class 14 May 13:


Optional readings


