

# ENG 161: Language and Mind

Spring Semester 2023  
XΩΔ 02, Room 011  
M/TH (9:00 am-10:30 am)

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**Instructor:** Natalia Pavlou  
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**Office hours:** M/TH 12pm-2pm,  
by appointment  
**Location:** Campus

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## Course Description

### Overview:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to linguistics, psychology, and the scientific study of language. The focus is studying how language develops in young children and how language and the mind interact throughout language production and comprehension. How does the brain represent and interpret language? How does language, in general, and a particular language in particular, relate with cognition and mental processes in people? How are cognition and language related? Is language like the software of a mind like a computer? What effects does language have on perception, focus, and memory? How can language be used to study the mind? The course will look at how empirical facts may be used to answer important philosophical problems about language and cognition as well as to answer important questions in the psychology and philosophy of mind and their interaction with language, such as how language and thought are related, how human development relates to "nature" and "nurture," and how to study these questions in syntax, semantics, phonology, and pragmatics.

### Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the fundamental notions of the field of study, particularly the acquisition, perception, and comprehension of language in both children and adults, and be able to synthesize the major concepts underlying language development and psychology.
- Investigate the connection between language, mind, and brain, and adopt a range of theoretical stances and perspectives about language and the neural architecture of the mind and brain.
- Recognize and comprehend the methodology, objectives, techniques, findings, and interpretations of the relevant research.
- Develop strong communication and writing skills with interactive class exercises and various assignments

## Course Details

### Grade Distribution

Class Attendance and Participation.....	10%
Response Paper OR RAR .....	10%
Participation in Class Debate.....	30%
Final Exam.....	50%

### **Attendance/Participation**

Attendance in lectures is obligatory and a continuous effort to participate in the discussion will be rewarded with 10% of your final grade.

### **Response paper or Research Awareness Requirement**

A response paper communicates a personal viewpoint and learning as they relate specifically to the class, paper, article, etc. in question and the ideas contained therein. For this class, students have to write a response paper for a short article posted on the class website (**min. 2 pages, double space, due April 28, by 11:59pm**).

The research awareness requirement(RAR) aims to develop awareness of ongoing research in the department, its research labs, and the wider University of Cyprus community. To satisfy it, you need to attend one (1) research presentation at one of the department's research labs (e.g. the CAT Lab) and submit a brief report on what you learned (**one page, single space, due April 28, by 11:59pm**).

You are required to do **ONLY ONE** of the above.

### **Participation in Class Debate**

For this task, the class will be divided in four teams and specific tasks will be assigned to each member. Each team will participate in an in-class debate with another team on a topic assigned to them relevant to the class. Each student will be graded **individually** during the debate, therefore all students have to be actively involved. This will be 25% of your grade. For the other 5% of your grade, you will have to prepare a poster with your arguments collectively as a team and email it to your instructor by **May 11, 11:59pm**. If a member of the team does not want to contribute to the poster preparation, they will lose 5% of the grade.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be cumulative and will include questions and exercises related to the discussion in the class and the course material.

### **Classroom Etiquette**

Students have an obligation to their classmates and instructor to behave in such a manner as to enhance the learning environment. Please do not engage in behavior which disrupts class or otherwise detracts from the ability of your fellow students to learn. Such behaviors include arriving at class late, leaving before class is dismissed, speaking while others are speaking, reading magazines in class, cell-phones ringing etc.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism in this class is unacceptable. Accidental or willful use of someone else's words, ideas, or evidence without attribution will be penalized by a failing grade on the paper, possibly a failing grade in the course, and reporting to the department. Information of plagiarism prevention can be found at <https://library.ucy.ac.cy/research-support/plagiarism-prevention/?lang=en>.

### **Textbook/Readings**

Language in Cognition (2010) by Cedric Boeckx,  
(available for purchase [www.blackwells.co.uk](http://www.blackwells.co.uk), [www.bookdepository.com](http://www.bookdepository.com), [www.amazon.de](http://www.amazon.de) and elsewhere)  
Additional class readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Tentative Schedule**

The schedule on the syllabus is subject to change. Changes, if any, will be announced in class.

	Wk.	<i>Monday/Thursday</i>
1	16/1-20/1	What do we call Language? Boeckx, chap. 1, Chomsky, chap. 4 (on Blackboard)
2	23/1-27/1	Formal properties of language Hauser et al., 2002, Boeckx, chap. 6
3	30/1-3/2	Formal properties of language Chomsky, chap. 5, Boeckx, chap.9
4	6/2-10/2	Schools of thought Boeckx, chaps. 2 and 3
5	13/2-17/2	Language and Thought Boeckx, chaps. 7 and 8
6	20/2-24/2	Linguistic relativity/ Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis Wolff and Holmes 2011, January and Kako 2007
7	27/2-3/3	Does language shape thought?  NO CLASS ON MONDAY  Malt et al 1999, Lucy and Gaskins 2003
8	6/3-10/3	Mind and Brain Boeckx, chap. 10
9	13/3-17/3	Evolution and Genetics Boeckx, chap. 11 and 12
10	20/3-24/3	Interfaces with perception and memory Tanenhaus et al. 1995
11	27/3-31/3	Sentence Processing Bock 1986
12	3/4-7/4	Bilingualism and the mind Kroll and Bialystok 2013
13	24/4-28/4	Spontaneous speaking, texting and the mind Clark and Tree 2002, Houghton et al. 2018