

Who: Prof. Karin Stromswold & Prof. Kristen Syrett
What: Language Games & Talking Heads
When: Tuesdays 10:20-11:40 AM
Where: ARC-203
Why: Because language is amazing!

How to contact us:

Prof. Stromswold karin.stromswold@rutgers.edu

Prof. Syrett: kristen.syrett@rutgers.edu

Main reading: Any edition of Pinker, Steven. *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*. Harper Perennial Modern.

Requirements

You must show up to class and actively participate. (Simply being physically present is not enough to pass!) We will also use the discussion forum on Sakai. Each week, we will ask you to do a brief (and hopefully fun) activity outside of class and post something at least one paragraph length to the forum.

Schedule and Topics

- Sept 15 Language games & talking heads: Introduction (Stromswold & Syrett)
Recommended reading: Pinker, chapter 1
- Sept 22 Auditory illusions and misunderstood song lyrics: Phonology (Stromswold)
Recommended reading: Pinker chapter 6
- Sept 29 Baby talk: How we learn words (Syrett)
Recommended reading: Pinker chapter 9
- Oct 6 Say what?: Slips of the tongue, tip of the tongue & lexical access (Stromswold)
Recommended reading: "Slips of the tongue" by Fromkin
- Oct 13 Splitting hairs & stretching the truth: Pragmatics (Syrett)
Recommended reading: *Introduction to Pragmatics* by Birner (ch. 1: section 1.1.1 only)
- Oct 20 Strange & misleading sentences: Syntax (Stromswold)
Recommended reading: Pinker chapter 7
- Oct 27 Globe-trotting: Language, culture, and thought around the world (Syrett)
Recommended reading: NY Times article by Deutscher
- Nov 3 Broken brains: The neural bases of language (Stromswold)
Recommended reading: Pinker chapter 10 and parts of chapter 2
- Nov 10 [to be announced]
- Nov 17 Doctor Dolittle's dilemma: Animal communication (Syrett)
Recommended reading: Pinker chapter 11