

INSPIRE/LINGUIST 3AS3 – Language and Communication in Autism Spectrum Disorder

Academic Year: 2021

Term: Winter

Day/Evening: Online

Instructor: Dr. Mackenzie Salt

Email: saltms@mcmaster.ca

- [Course Objectives](#)
 - [Textbooks, Materials & Fees](#)
 - [Method of Assessment](#)
 - [Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties](#)
 - [Additional Policies and Statements](#)
 - [Topics and Readings](#)
 - [Other Course Information](#)
-

Course Objectives

On completion of this course, students will:

- Be aware of the history of ASD;
- Be aware of the previous research methods used to research language difficulties along with some of the inherent issues therein;
- Be aware of current thinking on language and ASD with a focus on newer approaches;
- Think more critically about research methodologies used in the past and be more able to challenge assumption made in research into language in any community, not just ASD.

Class Dates:

- Lecture Videos (pre-recorded using Echo360) will be posted Thursday mornings for students to view.
- Synchronous drop-in discussion sessions are offered using Microsoft Teams on Mondays (8:00-9:00PM).

Course Description:

In this course, students will learn about autism spectrum disorder, ASD, specifically focusing on one key area of interest, language and communication. ASD is diagnosed based on impairments in language and social interaction, as well as repetitive behaviours. This course will focus on the former. Students will receive a primer about ASD, learning about what it is, how it was identified and when, what prominent theories were put forth to explain ASD, all with a focus on the language and social impairments identified as part of the disorder. Students will also learn about the history of the disorder including changes to its classification and how it is diagnosed. Students will engage with previous research, learning about how language deficits in ASD were originally determined and tested, and learn about the research methods used to study language in ASD as well as the pros and cons therein. Students will also explore the conflicting theories that offered explanations for language deficits in ASD in the past and will be introduced to current thinking and research into language abilities in ASD. Students will also be shown media

depictions of autistic people interacting with others to observe some of the symptomatology discussed in lecture. Students will also be asked to analyse any observed differences in what is seen compared to the research. Transcriptions of autistic adults interacting with others will also be analysed.

Class Schedule:

Students will watch lectures that are recorded using Echo360 and posted once a week (Thursday mornings). Students will also use Microsoft Teams to attend online drop-in discussion sessions on Mondays (8:00-9:00PM), akin to tutorials, where students can discuss the material with the instructor and ask any questions that they might have. Further details will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

Textbooks, Materials & Fees

Readings including journal articles and book chapters will be provided by the instructor via Avenue to Learn. For this course you will be required to install Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

Method of Assessment

Please note that INSPIRE/LINGUIST 3AS3 is a graded 3-unit course.

Students will carry out a total of four reflection assignments throughout this course. The first three Reflections are worth 30% each and the final Reflection is worth 40%. Only the marks from two of the first three reflections will be counted on your final grade. This means that you can drop your lowest grade reflection, of the first three, from your final grade. Each reflection assignment will be based on the material presented in lectures in a given week along with selected readings with provided prompts. Students will be expected think critically about the information they have been provided and reflect on the prompts given. The final Reflection is cumulative so I would recommend doing all three other reflections if possible. Penalty for late assignments will be 10% for the first 4 days past the deadlines. No assignments will be accepted past the deadline unless special arrangements were made before the due date.

- 30% - Reflection #1* (Due Week 3)
- 30% - Reflection #2* (Due Week 6)
- 30% - Reflection #3* (Due Week 10)
- 40% - Final Reflection (Due during Exam Period)
- Up to 2% - Bonus for Course Evaluation Completion

*Note: The lowest mark of the first three Reflections will be dropped from your final grade.

Course Evaluations

If 70% or more of the students in the course complete the course evaluations at the end of the course, all students will receive a 1% bonus on their final grade. If 90% or more of the students in the course complete the course evaluations at the end of the course, the bonus received by all students on their final grade will increase to 2%.

Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties

Students are expected to hand in all assignments on the specified due dates. Penalty for late assignments will be 10% for the first 4 days past the deadlines. No assignments will be accepted past the deadline unless special arrangements were made before the due date. Given that some course assignments require electronic submission, you should familiarize yourself with the Avenue to Learn Assignment in advance of the deadlines and ask for assistance as necessary. Problems with electronic submission WILL NOT be accepted as an excuse for lateness.

Please Note the Following Policies and Statements:

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an On-Line Element

Some courses use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lockdown their browser during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca e-mail to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Email correspondence policy

It is the policy of the Faculty of Humanities that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from each student's own McMaster University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. Instructors will delete emails that do not originate from a McMaster email account.

Modification of course outlines

The University reserves the right to change dates and/or deadlines etc. for any or all courses in the case of an emergency situation or labour disruption or civil unrest/disobedience, etc. If a modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be

given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. Any significant changes should be made in consultation with the Department Chair.

Request for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Topics & Readings

Topics to be covered in this course include:

- The history of autism
- Language abilities in autism
- Research methods studying child and adult language
- Language development
- Clinical linguistics
- Pragmatic language

Other Course Information

Course Communication:

1. **Avenue to Learn:** Announcements, lecture content, and grades will be posted to Avenue to Learn. The course page will be my primary method of contact, please check the course page regularly to ensure you don't miss out on important information or announcements.
2. **Email:** Feel free to email me (saltms@mcmaster.ca) if you have any questions or concerns. If there are any specific supports that may be useful to your learning, please also let me know. Please ensure that all communication for this course is through your mcmaster.ca email. Also, please include the course code in the subject line of your email. This helps me keep the course content together and makes it far less likely that a student's email will disappear or get lost. I will do my best to respond within 2 business days, however, please remember that I am human; sometimes I might be a little late or the email may get lost. If you do not hear back from me within 3 working days, feel free to re-send your email with a friendly reminder.
3. **Microsoft Teams:** Synchronous drop-in discussion sessions will be offered using Microsoft Teams. Instructions regarding how to use Microsoft Teams and any other information regarding this software will be posted in Avenue to Learn.
4. **Zoom:** A synchronous guest lecture is planned for this course using Zoom. Instructions regarding the guest lecture and how to use Zoom will be posted in Avenue to Learn.

Acknowledgement of Course Policies

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of INSPIRE/LINGUIST 3AS3 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly. Lack of awareness of the course policies cannot be invoked at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly (in class and post any changes to the course A2L).

Extreme Circumstances

The lecture schedule is only a guideline and may be modified during the course of the class. The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes.