Psychology of Education

Paper Code: 1

Course Overview

This Part II psychology course provides the opportunity to study psychological topics at an advanced level from different perspectives. We are concerned with the contribution of psychological research and theory in areas that are of personal and social importance. The course topics are relevant to anyone who wishes to extend and deepen their understanding of human development and social relationships, including those who intend to go on to work in educational contexts and apply psychological research findings in professional practice. You will be encouraged to gain a critical understanding of cognitive, social, emotional and sociocultural psychology, from the perspectives of human development, social relationships, classroom learning and wider educational systems. We focus on areas that are debated within psychology itself as well as presenting challenges for education and for society at large.

Students are asked and encouraged to engage critically with relevant psychological research studies and to make connections between topics across the whole paper. The sessions include a varied mix of discussion, lecture and other activities designed to promote active participation and learning. Different perspectives, arguments and questioning are welcome and encouraged throughout the course, supported by group activities and reflection on personal experience. There will also be some required reading preparation for certain sessions. Critical reference to relevant psychological literature and research methodology is an essential element of this course, and evaluation of research methodology is encouraged in the taught sessions, essay writing and supervisions.

Paper Coordinator:
Rupert Wegerif (rw583@cam.ac.uk)

Teaching & Supervising Team:
Sara Baker (stb32@cam.ac.uk)
Michelle Ellefson (mre33@cam.ac.uk)
Jenny Gibson (jlg53@cam.ac.uk)
Junlin Yu (jy318@cam.ac.uk)
Pablo Torres (torresp.uk@gmail.com)
Rupert Wegerif (rw583@cam.ac.uk)
Lecture schedule table:

The paper is divided into four sections that are taught by different members of the Psychology and Education academic group and other colleagues.

Session take place on Wednesdays 2pm-4pm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session Topic</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Section 1: Cognitive development</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11 Oct</td>
<td>Typical and atypical development of executive functions</td>
<td>Sara Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18 Oct</td>
<td>Executive functions in theory and practice</td>
<td>Sara Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>25 Oct</td>
<td>Play, Discovery and Exploration as Tools for Classroom Learning</td>
<td>Michelle Ellefson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>01 Nov</td>
<td>Learner-based pedagogies</td>
<td>Michelle Ellefson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Section 2: Perspectives on language disorders</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>08 Nov</td>
<td>Aetiology of language impairments</td>
<td>Jenny Gibson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 Nov</td>
<td>Descriptive, diagnostic or deterministic? Issues of labelling and long-term outcomes for individuals with language disorders</td>
<td>Jenny Gibson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>22 Nov</td>
<td>Impairments of pragmatics and social communication</td>
<td>Jenny Gibson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>29 Nov</td>
<td>Educational approaches to supporting children who have language disorders</td>
<td>Jenny Gibson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Lent</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>24 Jan</td>
<td>Culture, cognitive development and learning.</td>
<td>Pablo Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>31 Jan</td>
<td>Goal orientations and epistemic beliefs for learning, adaptive beliefs for cultural success</td>
<td>Pablo Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>07 Feb</td>
<td>Can I do it? Competence beliefs and causal attributions</td>
<td>Junlin Yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14 Feb</td>
<td>Can people like me succeed here? Identity and motivation</td>
<td>Junlin Yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Section 4: Dialogue, Technology and Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>21 Feb</td>
<td>How children learn to think</td>
<td>Rupert Wegerif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>28 Feb</td>
<td>Group thinking</td>
<td>Rupert Wegerif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>07 Mar</td>
<td>Technology and cognition</td>
<td>Rupert Wegerif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>14 Mar</td>
<td>Teaching thinking</td>
<td>Rupert Wegerif</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supervisions and essay questions:

Students are invited to participate in 6 supervisions for the course, normally in small groups. This may follow the pattern of having one supervision in each area plus some additional group supervision and/or revision in other area(s) of your choice. Our previous experience suggests, however, that learning is most effective when students take up the opportunity to have more than one supervision in at least one area. This approach supports your essay writing and learning at this level.

Essay titles and arrangements for supervisions are provided by those teaching each area. A full list of titles is available on the Course Moodle Site. You are encouraged to draw on different topics and perspectives from the course, as appropriate, in responding to supervision questions. Attendance at supervisions is VERY important. We have found in the past that students who failed to attend supervisions were noticeably less prepared for the final exam.

Section 1 Supervision Questions:

How does typical executive function development differ from atypical development such as that observed in the autism spectrum?

Discuss the relevance of executive functions to educational theory and practice.

Should playful learning be promoted in nursery and primary schools?

Should educational systems use more learner-based pedagogies?

Section 2 Supervision Questions:

The lack of consensus over terminology in the field of developmental language disorders means we should adopt a descriptive, rather than a categorical approach to identifying educational needs in this area. Critically discuss this statement with reference to evidence from research and practice.

Compare and contrast the profiles of language difficulties seen in two developmental disorders of your choice.

Give an overview of the language and communication difficulties observed in children described as having pragmatic language impairments. Critically analyse the evidence that these difficulties should be considered a 'mild form' of Autism.

Section 3 Supervision Questions:

How do cultural practices influence students’ thinking for learning?

What is the role of the classroom context in students’ adoption of goal orientations and epistemic beliefs and the productivity of these beliefs for learning?
Self-efficacy is a better predictor of academic performance than any other motivational beliefs; therefore, educators and researchers would do well to focus on students’ competence beliefs. Discuss.

Identity an important educational problem. Discuss motivational and self-identity processes that you think contribute to this problem.

Section 4 Supervision Questions:

Why do some psychologists challenge the Theory of Mind concept and are they right to do so?

Discuss the relationship between group thinking and individual thinking.

Discuss the relationship between technology and thinking.

What does it mean to teach thinking?

Assessment:

The three-hour written examination paper is divided into four sections, one for each section of the course, as above. Each exam section will have two questions (eight questions in total). Students are required to answer two questions, each from a different section. You are strongly encouraged to engage with material from more than one lecture to develop sufficiently comprehensive and critical responses to exam questions. Some lectures in different sections have particularly strong connections, as you will see on the course outline. Links between individual topics are expected when developing your argument in response to each exam question that you choose to answer. You can draw on material from different sections in answering any one question, but you must not use the same material twice.

This year there is one completely new section in this paper: Section 4. There are also some changes to Section 3. A specimen examination paper will be provided for these new sections. Please consult the paper co-ordinator or examiner, if you have any questions about these changes. Contact details will be provided on Moodle.
Readings

Section 1: Cognitive Development

1a. Executive function development
1b. Cognitive Development & Classroom Learning

Section 1a. Executive function development

These two sessions will examine the literature on executive function development across the lifespan. Executive functions are very similar to meta-cognition and self-regulation, but historically executive functions derive from neuropsychology, biological psychology and experimental psychology (as opposed to educational psychology). We will discuss typical and atypical development of executive functions, factors that affect how children use executive control (such as language) and how these findings can be applied to educational practice.

Lecture 1: Typical and atypical development of executive functions

Key reading

  Chapter available

Further readings


  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online
  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online

  Check University Library availability here

  Available online

  Available online
Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)
Check University Library availability [here](#)

Available online

Available online

**Lecture 2: Executive Function - From Theory to Practice**

**Key reading**

Available online

**Further readings**

Available online

Available online


Available online

Available online

• Blair, C., & Razza, R.P. (2007). Relating effortful control, executive function, and false belief understanding to emerging math and literacy ability in kindergarten. Child Development, 78,
647-663.

Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online


Available online

- Perry, N.E., Hutchinson, L., & Thauberger, C. (2007). Mentoring student teachers to design and implement literacy tasks that support self-regulated reading and writing. Reading &
Section 1b. Cognitive Development & Classroom Learning

These two sessions will explore research from the learning sciences about aspects that are important for promoting deep learning in younger and older children. Recent evidence suggests that deep learning occurs more readily in classroom settings that engage learners in active ways instead of traditional classroom settings. Across both lectures, we'll explore how the science of learning can inform innovative pedagogies that promote deep learning and transfer to non-taught materials as well as increase motivation and interest. In the first of the two sessions, we'll focus specifically on play and discovery/exploratory learning, especially for young children. The second session will extend the theme of exploration and play into late childhood, adolescence and adult education by considering innovative pedagogies that facilitate deep learning and transfer.

Lecture 3: Play, Discovery and Exploration as Tools for Classroom Learning

Key readings

Core Article:

Bulletin, 139, 1-34.  
Available online

Related Commentaries:

Available online

Available online

Available online

Available online

Further readings

Available online

Available online

Available online

Available online

Available online


  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

*In addition - here are a few books that might be useful for giving you some general background information about play.*

  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

  Read ebook online  
  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

### Lecture 4: Learner-Based Pedagogies

#### Key reading

  Available online

#### Further readings

  Available online

  Available online

  Available online


Section 2: Perspectives on language disorders

This set of four sessions will explore different perspectives on developmental language disorders.

In Lecture 5, we will briefly recap theories of language development from infancy through to adulthood before going on to consider what happens when language development does not proceed in the typical way. We will critically analyse theories concerning the biological, cognitive and social influences on atypical language development.

In Lecture 6, we will consider issues of terminology and labelling, and how these have influenced practice in research and educational contexts. We will investigate the perspectives of affected individuals and their families. Students will be introduced to theories about the links between language development and socio-emotional development, and look at the research evidence regarding long term educational, employment and health outcomes for children with a diagnosis of language impairment.
In Lecture 7, we will look in more depth at social communication difficulties and pragmatic language impairments. We will discuss pragmatic difficulties typically found in individuals with autism, ADHD and specific language impairments.

In Lecture 8, we will discuss challenges in the provision of appropriate adjustments to facilitate access to education and learning opportunities for those affected by language disorders. Students will gain skills in critical appraisal of intervention evidence and debate the relative merits of universal versus targeted and specialist educational provision.

Each week, one paper on the reading list is starred “**”. Please read this paper in advance of the class as it will form the basis of group discussion

**Lecture 5: Aetiology of language impairments**

In Lecture 5, we will briefly recap theories of language development from infancy through to adulthood before going on to consider what happens when language development does not proceed in the typical way. We will critically analyse theories concerning the biological, cognitive and social influences on atypical language development. The lecture will build on the earlier course content which students may have covered in Part I of the Education/PBS triposes, e.g. Language Acquisition, Introduction to Language Disorders.

**Key readings**

  
  [Available online](#)

  
  [Available online](#)

**Further Readings**

  
  [Available online](#)


  
  [Available online](#)
  *Available online*

  *Available online*

  *Available online*

  *Available online*

  *Available in print in the Education Library*

  *Available online*

  *Available online*

  *Available online*

Lecture 6: Descriptive, diagnostic or deterministic? Issues of labelling and long-term outcomes for individuals with language disorders

In Lecture 6, we will consider issues of terminology and labelling, and how these have influenced practice in research and educational contexts. We will investigate the perspectives of affected individuals and their families. Students will be introduced to theories about the links between language development and socio-emotional development, and look at the research evidence regarding long term educational, employment and health outcomes for children with a diagnosis of language impairment.

**Key readings - please read at least the starred papers before the lecture**


Part II 2017-18

41(3), 688-700
Available online

Available online

Further Reading

Available online

Check University Library availability here

Available in print in the Education Library

Available online

Available online

Available online

Available online

Available online


• Bryan, K and Mackenzie, J (2008) Meeting the speech, language and communication needs of vulnerable young people: Model of service delivery for those at risk of offending and re-
offending. London: RCSLT.


- Snow PC and Powell MB (2008) Oral language competence, social skills, and high risk boys: What juvenile offenders are trying to tell us? Children and Society 22, 16-28 Available online

Lecture 7: Impairments of pragmatics and social communication

In Lecture 7, we will look in more depth at social communication difficulties and pragmatic language impairments. We will discuss pragmatic difficulties typically found in individuals with autism, ADHD and specific language impairments.

Key readings


Further readings

  [Available online](#)

  [Read ebook online](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Read ebook online](#)

Check University Library availability [here](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Available online](#)

  [Available online](#)
Lecture 8: Educational approaches to supporting children who have language disorders

In the final session we will discuss challenges in the provision of appropriate adjustments to facilitate access to education and learning opportunities for those affected by language disorders. Students will gain skills in critical appraisal of intervention evidence and debate the relative merits of universal versus targeted and specialist educational provision.

Key readings


Further readings


Section 3: Social context, motivation, and learning

Lecture 9: Culture, cognitive development and learning.

This lecture presents theory and evidence about the role that culture may have for the development of thinking. First the role of general cultural artefacts, and social ways of organization shaping people’s everyday practices are presented as promoters of cognitive development. Following that,
“schooling”, understood as an educational culture subtype with its own motivational values is examined and analysed in relation to its relevance for cognitive development. The importance of classroom culture and its variations given by different teaching practices is also presented. Throughout the lesson we explore the thesis of how different cultures and cultural practices may promote specific ways of communicating for the development of higher order functions, such as metacognition, and the relevance these functions have been found to have for learning.

**Key Readings**


**Further Readings**

Lecture 10: Goal orientations and epistemic beliefs for learning, adaptive beliefs for cultural success

Some people have been found to learn motivated by the achievement of individual mastery while others by being able to show good/higher performance to others (i.e. goal orientations). Also, as learners people develop theories about what they think is knowledge and how we can access it (i.e. epistemic beliefs). These two different types of beliefs have been found to be related to learning; some times enhancing it and some other times lowering it. Throughout the lecture we will discuss if these beliefs could be seen as permanent individual characteristics, aspects that change through experience, or even positions that depend on situations. We will also talk about how these beliefs are influenced by the way they are promoted and afforded in the classroom and discuss if there is any particular orientation or epistemic belief that promotes learning more than others or whether this relationship may be dependable on subject and the culture of the classroom.

Key Readings

  Check University Library availability here

  Check University Library availability here

  Check University Library availability here

  Check University Library availability here

  Check University Library availability here


Further Readings

**On epistemologies**


**On goal orientations and related topics**


  [Read ebook online](#)

Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)


  [Read ebook online](#)

Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)
  Read ebook online  
  Check Faculty Library availability here


Lecture 11: Can I do it? Competence beliefs and causal attributions

An important motivation-related question children can ask themselves is “Can I do this task?” Studies show that people’s competence beliefs are strong predictors of their subsequent performance, their choice of activities to pursue, their levels of engagement, and their persistence. This lecture introduces competence-related beliefs that are prominent in theory and research on achievement motivation, including self-efficacy, attributions for success and failure, and mindsets about intelligence. In addition, we will look at family and school influences on the development of competence beliefs, as well as cultural and group differences in these self-beliefs.

Key Readings


Further Readings


Lecture 12: Can people like me succeed here? Identity and motivation

Identity is a central concept in psychology as well as the related disciplines of sociology, anthropology and philosophy. This lecture covers the most influential approaches to the study of self and identity in social psychology including personal and social identities, as well as independent and interdependent self-construals. The identity-based motivation theory is introduced to illustrate the mechanisms through which identity influences the way that people make meaning and take action. We will discuss the role of self and identity processes in contributing to unequal outcomes in education, and how interventions can be developed to unlock human potential and growth.

Key Readings

Further Readings


Section 4: Dialogue, Technology and Thinking

In this section we will explore some of the implications of the dialogic approach within psychology. The first lecture will look at the idea of dialogic and outline a dialogic understanding of thinking and how children learn to think. In the next session we will focus on group thinking discussing how this works and the relationship it has to individual thinking. In the third lecture we will expand on the idea of collective thinking with the addition of the medicating role of technology looking at how language, literacy and new communications technology informs thinking from the inside. Finally in the fourth lecture we will bring all these strands together in developing an understanding of what it might mean to teach thinking. Whereas traditional approaches to teaching thinking within educational psychology have tended to focus on individual thinking the implications of a dialogic approach lead to an expanded understanding that includes the need for educating cultures and designing technological supports.
Lecture 13: How children learn to think

Classic cognitive psychology tends to explore thinking as if it was an objective process on the model of computer algorithms. In this lecture we will look at some challenges to this model and explore a dialogic alternative. What is at stake will be exemplified through recent debates about theory of mind.

Key Readings


- Dialogue on Intersubjectivity: An Interview with Stein Bråten and Colwyn Trevarthen [Available online](#)

Further Readings


Lecture 14: Group thinking

How come some groups seem smarter than others? What processes support group thinking? How do these relate to individual thinking?

Key Readings


Further Readings


**Lecture 15: Technology and cognition**

Is technology a kind of addition that supports our thinking or is it, rather, something that informs our thinking on the inside? If so in what ways does technology shape thinking?

**Key Readings**


  Read text online [here](#)
  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

**Further Readings**

• Cole, M., & Derry, J. (2005). We have met technology and it is us. *Intelligence and technology: The impact of tools on the nature and development of human abilities*, 210-227.

  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)


  Read text online [here](#)
  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)
  Check Psychology Library availability [here](#)

  Check Faculty Library availability here  
  Check SPS Library availability here

  Check Faculty Library availability here

  Check University Library availability here

  Check Faculty Library availability here  
  Check University Library availability here


**Lecture 16: Teaching thinking**

A dialogic approach to understanding thinking and the development of thinking gives an important role to culture and to technology. In this session we will explore the implications of this approach for the idea of teaching thinking. If thinking is mediated by cultural tools and technologies that shape it from the inside then teaching thinking might need to include culture design and educational technology design. This final lecture will explore the idea that educational psychology could be a design-based science dedicated to creating the future and, more specifically, to building a collective or planetary intelligence combining humans and machines.

**Key Readings**

  Available online

**Further Readings**

  Check Faculty Library availability here  
  Check Betty & Gordon Moore Library availability here
  Check Faculty Library availability [here](#)

  Available online

  Available online

  To follow

  Available online