SOCIAL COGNITION

Course requirements and introduction

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OUTLINE

- Short introduction and expectations
- Course description and requirements
- Introduction to **Social Cognition**

INTRODUCTION

About me

Postdoc at The Puzzle of Danish project

Interests: language processing in the healthy and impaired brain, cross-linguistic studies, linguistic aspects of aphasia, cognitive and linguistic aspects of schizophrenia

MD, trained in psychiatry
Yerevan State Medical University

MSc in Clinical linguistics
Universities of Groningen, Potsdam and Eastern Dinland

PhD in Psycho- and neurolinguistics
University of Copenhagen

INTRODUCTION

- Name
- Background (what have you studied?)
- One fact about you that you would like everyone to know about it
- What are your expectations from the course?

MY EXPECTATIONS

1. Always show up prepared
2. Submit the assignments on time
3. Bring the feedback and the assignment to the class
4. Attendance not mandatory (but it will help you a lot for the exam)
5. Email me or talk to me in private, if there is anything important you'd like me to know (e.g. special needs)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ECTS	10
Requirements for exam	Take-home assignment
Grade	7-point grading scale
Examiner	External co-examination
STADS UVA code	147202U002
Group assignment	No
Number of pages	10 - 13
Exam date	January 4th 2021

THE EXAM

- Paper on a chosen topic (check the syllabus for inspiration)
- The teacher will guide you to make your topic more concrete
- Agree on a topic with the teacher by **October 15th**
- You may work on a topic in a group but have to write separate papers
- We will be working on the exam paper throughout the semester
- The paper should have an introduction and conclusion
- For now, don't worry, you'll get more instructions throughout the semester ☺

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PRACTICAL MATTERS

- If you don't understand something, interrupt me!
- If you have questions, feel free to ask in the classroom, during the break or send me an email
- Assignments to submit every week (smaller in the beginning, larger in the end)
- Assignments (and the exam) may be submitted in Danish or English
- Reading material: the list on the syllabus + literature you will have to find yourselves
- Students with special needs (including in terms of COVID-19) please send me an email
- Due to COVID-19 things may change. Check the syllabus for details

COVID-19 NOTE

- Remember to sanitize your hands and surroundings before and after class
- Keep 1 meter distance between the other students
- If you have symptoms, DO NOT show up at the class
- More information: https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/corona/faq-for-students/

THE COURSE PLAN

W1. Introduction: what is social cognition?
W2. The evolution of human cognition
W3. Language evolution
W4. Theory of mind
W5. Social cognition in primates
W6. Social learning
W7. The linguistic dimension of social cognition
Mid-way evaluation
W8. Social identity and the self
W9. Linguistic coordination
W10. Social schemas and representations
W11. Attitudes and stereotypes
W12. Deviant social cognition I: developmental aspects
W13. Deviant social cognition II: adults
Wrap-up & quiz

LEARNING OUTCOMES: AFTER THE COURSE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO...

Knowledge:
- demonstrate knowledge of theories of social cognition, i.e. theories of human interaction and the way people understand each other and coordinate their actions accordingly

W4. Theory of mind

W6. Social learning

W8. Social identity and the self

W9. Linguistic coordination

W10. Social schemas and representations

W11. Attitudes and stereotypes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (2)

- demonstrate knowledge of key trends within developmental psychology and primatological research relevant for understanding social cognition

W4. Theory of mind

W5. Social cognition in primates

W6. Social learning

- demonstrate knowledge of key theories of evolutionary linguistics and the development of linguistic structures.

W2. The evolution of human cognition

W3. Language evolution

W7. The linguistic dimension of social cognition

LEARNING OUTCOMES (3)

Skills:
- account for human social behaviour based on an insight into social-cognitive mechanisms

W11. Attitudes and stereotypes

W12. Deviant social cognition I: developmental aspects

W13. Deviant social cognition II: adults

+ the exam

LEARNING OUTCOMES (4)

- analyse various types of social interaction based on the theories and concepts introduced in the course.

W10. Social schemas and representations

W11. Attitudes and stereotypes

W12. Deviant social cognition I: developmental aspects

W13. Deviant social cognition II: adults

+ the exam

Competences:
- independently search for relevant knowledge in social cognition.

All the topics + the exam

QUESTIONS?

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL COGNITION

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE
AARHUS UNIVERSITY

BYURAKN ISHKHANYAN
POSTDOC

WHAT IS SOCIAL COGNITION?

- Turn to the person next to you and discuss what social cognition is (respect the distance ☺) 2 - 3 minutes

Code: 3549516

- Submit 3 key words to menti.com

SOCIAL COGNITION

"The study of **social cognition** concerns how people make sense of other people and themselves. It focuses on people's everyday understanding both as the phenomenon of interest and as a basis for theory about people's everyday understanding. Thus it concerns both how people think about the social world and how they think they think about the social world. It also draws heavily on fine grained analysis provided by cognitive theory and method."

Fiske & Taylor (2017)

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

WHAT IS THIS?

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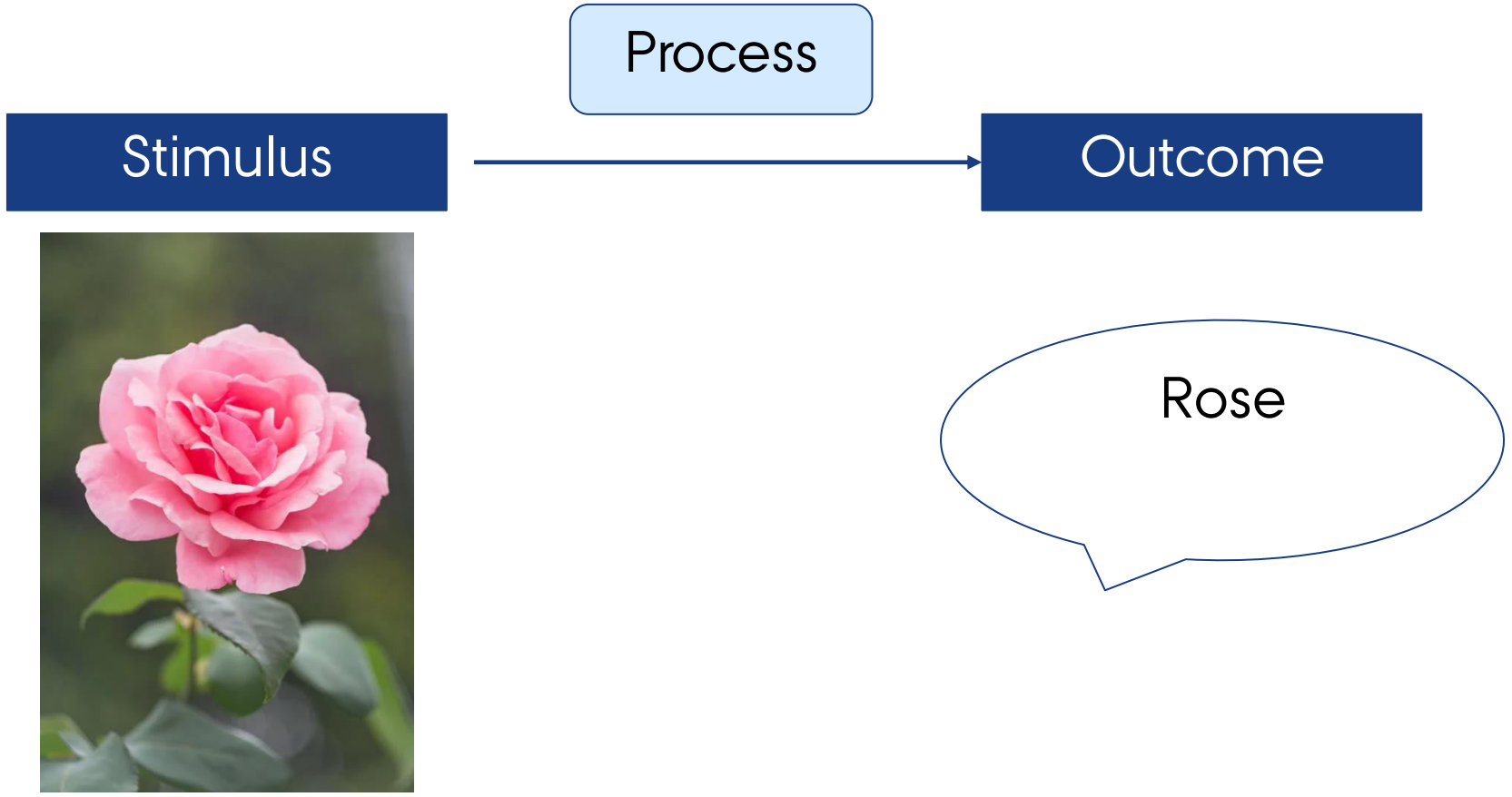
COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Stimulus → Outcome

Rose

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY



How can you measure the outcome and the process?
Discuss with the person sitting next to you.

MEASUREMENT METHODS

Outcome
- Reaction times (mouse/button click)
- Accuracy (mouse/button click)

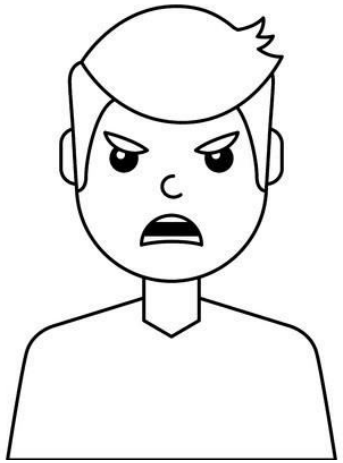
Process
- Eye-tracking
- Mouse tracking
- EMG
- EEG

...

SOCIAL COGNITION

Process

Stimulus → Outcome



Friend snapped at you

- He's unpleasant
- I've done something wrong
- He had a bad day

....

PEOPLE VS. INANIMATE OBJECTS

How are people different from inanimate objects?

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PEOPLE VS. INANIMATE OBJECTS

People	Objects
Causal agents	Not causal agents
Mutual perception	Do not perceive
Similar to you	Unlike you
Have nonobservable attributes	Do not have nonobsevable attributes
Change over time	Change less over time
Cognition about people hard to check	Cognition about objects easy to check
Complex	Not so complex
Requiring explanation (e.g. fragile person)	Not really (e.g. fragile cup)

THE READING MATERIAL: EXERCISE

Step 2: With the person next to you go through the document and add the definitions to at least three terms that were not added by your pair. Feel free to use the reading material

10 minutes

Step 3: If you finish early, go through the other definitions and see, if you want to make changes (add/remove/edit). Make sure no term remains undefined.

Now you have a nice socially created glossary ☺

THE READING MATERIAL: EXERCISE

Step1: With the person next to you skim through the chapter by Fiske & Taylor (2017) and find at least three new terms (minimum 3 per pair) you learned through the text and add them to this document. If you see someone else has already put it here, try to come up with a new one.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kNvELw4SrW4bSPfqYT7JCwueGVJQD96KRI1xKtE_LO4/edit?usp=sharing

5 minutes

THE SOCIAL BRAIN AND ITS SUPERPOWERS

https://youtu.be/NNhk3owF7RQ

WHY STUDY SOCIAL COGNITION?

Discuss the following in groups of 3-4 students (10 minutes):

1. Why is it important to study social cognition in general?
2. Why is it important to study social cognition within your study program?
3. What real-life problems can social cognition address?

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SUMMARY

- Humans are social animals and social cognition studies how people make sense of other people and themselves
- Social cognition uses cognitive psychology methods to study social interaction
- Social cognition is increasingly interested in the process and not the bare outcome
- Studying social cognition helps us understand how people interact and how real-life social problems may be solved