COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Course unit title	Code
Theory of Metaphor Metaforos teorija	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s)
Coordinator: prof. habil. dr. Fatima Eloeva	Faculty of Philology, VU; Department of Classical Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
Second	Optional

Mode of delivery	Course unit delivery period	Language of instruction
Face-to-face	Spring semester	English

Requirements for students	
Pre-requisites: English proficiency level B1	**Co-requisites (if any):**

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	133	32	101

Purpose of the course unit: programme competences to be developed		
The course aims at examining various scientific approaches to the analysis of metaphor. Students will familiarize themselves with different ways of studying the metaphor: the traditional approach, based on the Classical tradition, the use of metaphor in rhetoric as well as the concept of the cognitive metaphor. Different approaches to metaphor in various fields of knowledge (semiotics, fine arts, cognitive sciences) will be studied and tried out.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Assessment methods**
Ability to carry out a coherent argument in oral and written form. Ability to think analytically and critically, taking into consideration that the main topic of discussion is the connection of cognitive abilities with metaphoric thinking	The analysis of the formation of various approaches to metaphors in an interactive class format. Students and the professor will analyze and interpret some samples of sample texts (close reading) and analyze different linguistic situations	There will be an analytical paper assigned in the middle of the term—students will be required to meet with the professor to discuss the theme of their paper and their plans for approaching the analysis of the specific material they choose to study (in English or Lithuanian). At the end of the term there will be a final exam in the format of a set of open questions marked for content (in English or Lithuanian).

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study: hours and assignments	
	Lectures	Consultations	Seminars	Practical sessions	Laboratory work	Internship/workplacement	**Total contact hours**	**Self study**	**Assignments**
1. The traditional concept of metaphor. The definition of metaphor according to Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel, Kassirer, Ortega-i-Gasset etc. Metaphor in rhetorics, stylistics, literary criticism. Concept of mapping - source domain and target domain.	2		2				4	8	Ernst Cassirer Sprache und Mythe, Leipzig - Berlin, S. 68-80 Ortega-y-Gasset Two great metaphors, London, 1975
2. "Metaphors we live by" by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson.	2		2				4	8	Lakoff and Johnson, Metaphors we liveby. 1980, Chicago Women, fire and dangerous things, 1987, University of Chicago
3. Expansion of metaphor in cognitive sciences.	2		2				4	8	Firth R. Symbols public and private. London, 1973
4. Metaphor as technique and metaphor as ideology.	2		2				4	8	Jakobson, Roman Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances, 1956
5. Analysis of functional styles where metaphor is prohibited. Admirers and opponents of metaphor. English rationalist-philosophical school and metaphor. Romantic philosophy (Nietzche) and metaphor	2		2				4	8	Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. (ed) The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought Cambridge University Press
6. The role of metaphor in scientific discourse: metaphor and thought metaphor and logic metaphor and mythology	2		2				4	8	Ortony A.(ed) Metaphor and Thought, Cambridge, 1999
7. Pre-metaphoric thinking (the role of metaphor in cultures with no/or limited written tradition). Metaphors in endangered languages. Languages with rich and poor metaphorics. Child speech and language development and metaphor.	2		2				4	8	Eloeva F, Perekhvalskaya E Premetaphorc thinking or whether there are languages without metaphors, Voprosyjazykoznanija, Moscow, 2013
8. Roman Jakobson's approach to metaphor. Metaphor and Symbol. Metaphor and metonymy.	2		2				4	8	Jakobson, Roman Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances, 19563
9. Essay writing.								37	Study of extra theoretical and secondary material, performing the analysis, composing and editing the text.
Total	**16**		**16**				**32**	**101**	

Assessment strategy	Weight, percentage	Assessment period	Assessment criteria
Final Essay (in English or Lithuanian), ~ 15 pages	60	Exam session	From 0 to 6 points are given based on the quality of research, ability to employ a relevant theoretic method and standard of academic writing.
Test	30	Exam session	From 0 to 3 points are given depending on the quality of answers to a set of open questions.
Work during seminars	10	During the spring semester	Students are required to participate in the analysis and discussion of the assigned texts. From 0 to 1 points are given based on the student's preparation for the class and engagement during the seminars.
Generative Artificial Intelligence Use Generative AI tools must be used and declared in accordance with the procedures established by the Faculty of Philology at Vilnius University. Any undeclared use of such tools, or any use that violates these procedures, constitutes a breach of academic integrity.			

Required reading				
1. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. (ed)	2008	The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought		Cambridge University Press
2. Lakoff, George & Mark Johnson	1980	Metaphors We Live By		Cambridge University Press
3. Jakobson, Roman	1956	Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances		Hague: Mouton
4. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. (ed)	2008	The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought		Cambridge University Press
5. *Other material prepared by the teacher and uploaded onto MOODLE*				
Recommended reading				
1. Lakoff, George	1980	Women, Fire and Dangerous Things		Chicago: University of Chicago Press
2. M. Knowles, R. Moon	2006	Introducing metaphor		Routledge, L and NY

Description updated the 18th of November 2026.