



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Introduction to Psycholinguistics	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Davide Castiglione, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laura Vilkaitė-Lozdienė Other:	Vilnius University Faculty of Philology, Universiteto g. 5, LT-01131, Vilnius, tel. +370 5 268 7207, e-mail studijos@flf.vu.lt

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
1 st (bachelor)	Elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face to face	Autumn	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: English C1	Co-requisites (if relevant): none

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	125	32	93

Purpose of the course unit
The purpose of the course is to develop students' awareness and understanding of how the brain and the mind process language. The students will be introduced to the main concepts of psycholinguistics. And, even more importantly, they will gain some practical hands-on experience in designing and administering experimental studies, and communicating the results of such studies.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<u>Generic competences:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility: reading the assigned chapters and papers ahead of the seminars, attending the seminars, asking questions, posing problems, and monitoring one's learning process • Cooperation: seeing learning as a cooperative process implemented in some of the in-class activities and optionally in the final assignment (see Assessment strategies) • Problem-solving: considering alternative interpretations of results, finding methodological solutions with the resources available • Openness to change: some of the topics and the general methodology of psycholinguistics may appear at 	Individual study, group and pair discussion, practical tasks and activities, multimedia materials, and answering sets of pre-assigned questions before each seminar	Mid-term test (35%) Experimental report (65%)

<p>the periphery of more traditional areas of study within English philology, straddling across the philosophy of mind, cognitive science and evolutionary biology; this brings a fresh challenge to students</p> <p><u>Subject-specific competences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students will practice analytical reading by finding key information in peer-reviewed articles (research question, methods, findings...); • students will produce research reports requiring excellent time management to schedule and accomplish each sub- task (review of literature, experiment design, data collection, testing, report writing); • students will enhance team working skills by collaborating with peers to produce research reports replicating peer- reviewed team publications; • students will understand and replicate various research methods, from experimental designs to data collection procedures; • students will learn to critically assess their own work, stating its limitations as well as possible ways to overcome them in future research; • students will be exposed to classical and recent research in a variety of psycholinguistics areas, and hence appreciate the development and scope of the discipline; • students will learn how grammatical structures and aspects of vocabulary are processed, acquired, remembered and produced by speakers; • students will learn technical terms with high currency in the discipline • students will be introduced to freely available research tools, programmes and databases (e.g., e-prime, rating norms) 		
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Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. The status of psycholinguistics. Aims, research areas and short history of the discipline.	2						2	4	Harley (2014), 9-16 (Ch. 1); Warren (2011), 1-12 (Ch. 1)
2. Language and the brain. The biological basis of language. General	1		1				2	7	Harley (2014), 17-21 (Ch. 1); Warren (2011), 9-10 (Ch. 1);

brain structure and function. Localisation and lateralisation. Lesion studies.								Groot & Hagoort (2018), 310-329 (Ch. 16).	
3. Language acquisition. The cognitive basis of language; how children learn language. Main methods to study child language acquisition. Feral children and the critical age issue. Usage-based approach to language acquisition.	1		1				2	7	Preparing to discuss Tomasello (1995) paper.
4. Bilingualism and second language acquisition. Types of bilingualism; methods to teach a second language; the mental lexicon in two languages; critical age hypothesis for the second language; advantages of being a bilingual speaker.	1		1				2	7	Harley (2014), 153-163 (Ch. 5); Critical evaluation of the research of bilingual advantage: preparing for the discussion.
5. Mind vs body debate: language and mind; AI and natural language processing; from mentalists to materialists; Theory of Mind			2				2	4	Steinberg (2001), 276-307; Altgassen et al (2014)
6. Language and animals. Animal communication and teaching human language to animals: apes, dolphins, parrots.			2				2	3	Aitchison (2008), 24-69 (Ch. 2-3); Harley (2014), 54-67 (Ch. 3); Steinberg (2001), 145-165 (Ch. 5); Townsend et al. (2018)
7. Sign language and gestures: types of sign language: complete vs. incomplete; speech-based vs. non-speech-based; American Sign Language (ASL); types and functions of gestures; cross-linguistic variation in gestures			2				2	4	Steinberg (2001), 50-65 (Ch. 2); Warren (2011), 85-97 (Ch. 6)
8. Productive language skills 1: planning utterances. Sentence complexity; syntax and speech; fillers, pauses, speech acts			2				2	7	Aitchison (2008), 234-256 (Ch. 11); Warren (2011), 13-35 (Ch. 2)
9. Productive language skills 2: finding words. Speech errors, slips of the tongue; malapropisms; lexical selection; association norms			2				2	7	Warren (2011), 37-52 (Ch. 3)
10. Receptive language skills: comprehension. Memory, inference, prior knowledge, the role of context, reference, ambiguity, models of text processing			2				2	4	Harley (2014), 360-391 (Ch. 12)
11. Receptive language skills: reading and reading disorders. Models of reading; normal reading; dyslexia and other reading disorders			2				2	7	Harley (2014). 209-239 (Ch. 7);
12. Receptive language skills: listening. Recognizing speech; categorical perception; problems in the listening process; the influence of frequency			2				2	4	Harley (2014). 258-283 (Ch. 9)
13. Methods in psycholinguistics: reaction time experiments, eye-tracking, brain scanning. How to design an experiment: forming hypotheses, types of data, manipulating variables, randomisation, and questionnaires. Replication studies.	1		1				2	4	Trying out some existing resources, such as https://www.pytoolkit.org/ , https://www.lexutor.ca/ . Trying out some

									classical psycholinguistic tests.
14. Ethics in psycholinguistic research. Informed consent, participant recruitment, and ethical experiments.	1		1				2	4	Examining various examples of informed consent sheets. Preparing for a group discussion.
15. Reading experimental reports and reporting experiments. Charts, figures, descriptive statistics, and the structure of the report	1		1				2	3	Examining a few experimental papers. Exploring the best ways to present the data clearly.
16. Replication studies. Definition of replication studies. Discussing the importance of replication studies. Discussing their ideas for their own final assignment.			2				2	7	Language teaching review panel (2008), 1-14. Choosing a study to replicate.
17. Creating an experiment and writing a short experimental report.								10	Designing an experiment, collecting data, describing the data and writing the experimental report.
Total	8		24				32	93	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Mid-term test	35%	(20th Nov)	In-class test. Tasks include, but are not limited to: true/false statements, multiple choices, gap filling, matching terms and definitions, discussing ideas and paraphrasing parts of research articles. Answers will be assessed for relevant content and coherence of argumentation.
1,500-word experimental report based on the replication of an existing study	65%	(8th January)	<p>Students choose one out of three psycholinguistic papers provided by the lecturers and try to replicate it in a simplified manner. All the steps of designing, piloting the experiment, and analysing the data will be discussed during the seminars.</p> <p>Assessment criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of original paper – 20% • Accuracy of replication (within the limits of available equipment) – 20% • Critical evaluation of own results and design – 20% • Presentation of data, descriptive statistics, appendices – 20% • Academic conventions, clarity of exposition, use of English – 20% <p>Reports are assessed according to a 65-point scale:</p> <p>60-65pts = 10 (excellent) Outstanding, exceptional. All criteria are met to the highest standard; very hard to find flaws/inaccuracies; exceptional self-critical attitude and assessment of results; potential for an interesting dissertation proposal</p> <p>54-59 pts = 9 (very good) Impressive, remarkable. Most criteria are met to the highest standard; hard to find flaws/inaccuracies; remarkable self-</p>

			<p>critical evaluation of results</p> <p>48-53 pts = 8 (good) Above average. Most criteria are met to a good standard; minor flaws/inaccuracies; appreciable self-critical evaluation of results</p> <p>42-47 pts = 7 (average) Most criteria are met to an average standard, or few to a good standard; some flaws/inaccuracies which however are not serious; some genuine attempts at self-critical evaluation of results</p> <p>36-41 pts = 6 (satisfactory) Most criteria are met to a satisfactory standard, or few to an average standard; a few noticeable flaws/inaccuracies; little attempt at self-critical evaluation of results; ideas/contents could be organised better</p> <p>30-35 pts = 5 (sufficient) Most criteria are met to a sufficient standard, or few to a satisfactory standard; a few serious flaws but the spirit of the assignment is understood overall; results are reported but not really interpreted/evaluated; organisation of ideas/content is sometimes chaotic</p> <p>< 29 pts = 1, 2, 3, 4 (insufficient) Fails to meet most criteria to a sufficient standard; serious flaws and fundamental misunderstandings of theoretical literature and spirit of the assignment; hardly a replication of an existing study</p> <p>PASS is set at 30/65 pts. (overall PASS from 48/100 pts., insofar as both the test and the report reach the minimum score for a pass, e.g. if the report is 40/65 but the test 8/35, = 48/100 is not a pass until the test is passed in the retake)</p>
<p>The final course grade is calculated by adding together the grades for both the Midterm and the experimental report. If a student fails or does not complete any component(s) of the cumulative assessment, a score of zero (0) is assigned; there is no need to retake this part; no separate opportunity is provided to retake individual components of the cumulative assessment.</p> <p>In case the student fails the course, the retake is organized in accordance with the University's established procedure.</p>			

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Aitchison, J.	2007	<i>The Articulate Mammal: An Introduction to Psycholinguistics</i>	Chapters 2, 3, 6, 11	Taylor & Francis e-Library
Altgassen, M., Vetter, N. C., Phillips, L. H., Akgün C., Kliegel M.	2014	<i>Theory of mind and switching predict prospective memory performance in adolescents</i>	(Full article)	Journal of Experimental Child Psychology 127, 163-175
Ambridge B. & Rowland C. F	2013	<i>Experimental methods in studying child language acquisition</i>	(Full article)	Cognitive Science
Conklin, K., Alotaibi, S., Pellicer-	2020	<i>What eye-tracking tells us about reading-only and</i>	(Full article)	Second Language Research 36(3), 257-276

Sánchez, A., Vilkaitė, L.		<i>reading-while- listening in a first and second language</i>		
de Groot, A.M.B, & Hagoort, P.	2018	<i>Research Methods in Psycholinguistics and the Neurobiology of Language</i>	Chapters 4, 6, 16	Wiley Blackwell
Harley, T. A.	2014	<i>The Psychology of Language</i> (4th ed.).	Chapters	London: Psychology Press.
Ibbotson, P. & Tomasello, M.	2009	<i>Prototype constructions in early language acquisition</i>	(Full article)	Language and Cognition 1- 1, 59-85
Steinberg, D. & Natalia V Sciarini	2003	<i>An Introduction to Psycholinguistics</i>	Chapters 1, 2, 5	Harlow/UK: Pearson Education Limited
Townsend, S. W., Sabrina Engesser, S., Sabine Stoll, S., Klaus Zuberbu, K., Bickel, B.	2018	<i>Compositionality in animals and humans</i>		PLoS Biol 16(8)
Tomasello, Michael	1995	Language is not an instinct.	(Full article)	Cognitive Development, 10, 131-156
Warren, P.	2011	<i>Introducing psycholinguistics</i>	Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6	Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Language Teaching review panel	2008	<i>Replication studies in language learning and teaching: Questions and answers</i>	(Full article)	Language Teaching 41(1): 1-14
Recommended reading				
Aitchinson, J.	1990	<i>Words in the Mind: An Introduction to the Mental Lexicon</i>		Oxford: Blackwell
Field, J.	2003	<i>Psycholinguistics: A Resource Book for Students</i>	.	London: Routledge
Field, J.	2004	<i>Psycholinguistics: The Key Concepts</i>		London: Routledge
Jackendoff, R.	1993	<i>Patterns in the Mind</i>		Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead.
Pinker, S.	2000	<i>The Language Instinct</i>		Penguin, Harmondsworth.