COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Author Stance in Discourse / Autoriaus pozicija diskurse	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Assoc. Prof. Dr Anna Ruskan Assoc. Prof. Dr Audronė Šolienė	Department of English Philology Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
BA	Optional

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Seminars	Spring semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: C1 level of English	Additional requirements (if any): No

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	48	102

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competencies to be developed

The course's primary objective is to familiarise students with the latest advancements in the studies of author stance. It provides insights into how authors or speakers position themselves through language, expressing their attitudes, judgments, and commitments in various types of discourse. The course aims to enhance students' linguistic competence and writing skills while broadening their theoretical understanding and practical application of authorial stance across different forms of discourse. The course unit also aims to develop the following competencies:
 	
Generic competences:
 	
1. **Responsibility**: the ability to set goals, make plans, and take responsibility for them:
   1.1. Will be able to set goals, choose and use resources necessary for the completion of a task, plan their time, and follow deadlines;
   1.2. will be able to take responsibility for their work/study results and learn from mistakes.
2. **Co-operation**: the ability to successfully work in a team:
   2.1 Will be able to work in a team by setting common goals, sharing information, and looking for solutions together.
3. **Problem-solving:** the ability to solve problems by relying on analytical, critical, and creative thinking:
   3.1. Will be able to identify problems and challenges in their own and related fields;
   3.2. will be able to identify problems by finding, analysing, and critically assessing relevant information, generate new ideas, and choose the most optimal solutions.
4. **Openness to change**: the ability to understand the necessity of change and the intention to improve oneself constantly:
   4.1. will be open to new ideas, strive to change, and be creative and innovative;
   4.2. will be able to evaluate the quality of their actions and achievements and will strive to acquire the competencies necessary for future change.
 	
Subject-specific competences:
 	
5. **Essential knowledge and skills in linguistics**: perception of language as a phenomenon and perception of linguistics as a scientific discipline:
   5.1. Will know, understand, and be able to define linguistics as a scientific discipline and properly use and interpret the basic concepts and terms of linguistics;
   5.2. will acquire knowledge of the main branches and methods of linguistics.
6. **Understanding and analysis of the English language system at various levels:** phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc.:
   6.1. Will gain knowledge of the English language system;

6.2. Will be able to describe, analyse and interpret English-language phenomena at various levels (phonetic, morphological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, language development, etc.) and compare them with Lithuanian or another language using appropriate terminology and methods.
7. **Communication skills in English (C1-C2)**: listening, reading, speaking, writing, and mediation:
   7.1. Will be able to understand, translate, edit, and create texts of various genres in English, taking into account the communication intention, addressee, etc., and mediate in various communication situations;
   7.2. will communicate correctly and effectively in English in various situations, considering the communication intention, addressee, social environment, etc. (C1 according to CEFR).
8. **Competence of a researcher of language and literature**: the ability to independently conduct linguistic, literary or interdisciplinary research applying the acquired philological knowledge and skills in practice:
   8.1. Will be able to identify a linguistic, literary, cultural or interdisciplinary problem and choose appropriate empirical material, research methods and bibliographic sources;
   8.2. will be able to collect, analyse, systematise and critically evaluate material from various sources and adequately apply philological research methods to investigate the selected research problem.
9. **Ability to apply philological knowledge and skills in practice within and outside the University:**
   9.1. Will be able to apply the acquired knowledge and skills of English philology during communication and cooperation in an intercultural (and multilingual) environment, creating, translating, and editing various texts, teaching English as a foreign language, etc.;
   9.2. will be able to use modern information technologies, data resources, and research resources to conduct linguistic and literary analysis of English texts and present the results of analysis and/or interpretation to the public to contribute to the practical applicability of English philology studies (corpora, dictionaries, term banks and glossaries, thematic websites, literature maps, etc.).

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
After the completion of the course, students will be able to: 1. Apply diverse theoretical frameworks and critically analyse the authorial stance constructed linguistically, including modality, discourse markers, evaluative language, and other means across various types of discourse (academic, political, media, etc.). 2. Understand and appreciate cultural variations in how the author's stance is expressed across different linguistic communities, fostering sensitivity to cultural norms and social contexts in communication. 3. Effectively convey their own stance in academic and professional writing, using appropriate rhetorical strategies. 4. Conduct an independent research project involving authentic language data analysis and applying theoretical concepts and analytical tools.	• Seminars, group discussions, and individual work (critical reading and analysis of research articles). • Research tasks and assignments. • Research project work.	The final mark will be based on the following assignments: • **Mid-term test (Content test)** (20 %): • **Research in progress presentations** (20 %) • **Term paper**: (60 %): • structure + content (40%) • language use + academic conventions (20%)

Content: breakdown of the topics	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Introduction to the course: aims, structure, and assessment scheme.			1				1		
2. The definition of stance and types of stance.			2				4	6	Biber et al. (2021: 958-978)
3. Expressions of stance.			2				4	6	Biber (2006: 97-116)
4. Attitudinal stance.			2				4	6	Ruskan (2020: 12-16) Aijmer (2008: 11-36)
5. Stance and modality. Types of modality (epistemic, deontic, dynamic). Expressions of modality: modal auxiliaries, quasi-auxiliaries, modal adverbs, adjectives, nouns.			2				4	6	Huddleston, Pullum (2002: 172-179; 2005: 53-59); Ruskan (2020: 48-56); Facchinetti (2013: 359-377)
6. Stance and discourse markers.			2				4	6	Crible (2017: 99-124)
7. MID-TERM TEST			2				2	10	

Topic											
8. Writing a research paper. Students' research proposals. A general structure of a research paper. Writing a literature review: introduction.			5				5	16	*How to Write a Research Paper in Linguistics, Literature, and Cultural Studies* (Chapters 2 and 8)
9. Writing the other sections of the paper: data & methods, findings, and conclusions.			6				6	30	*How to Write a Research Paper in Linguistics, Literature, and Cultural Studies* (Chapters 3 and 5)
10. Presentations of research in progress, peer review, and individual feedback.			12				12	16	
11. Summary and course evaluation			2				2		
Total			**48**				**48**	**102**	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Cumulative evaluation	**100 %**		Students must maintain a minimum attendance rate of 70% as there is a well-established and significant link between class attendance and academic performance. If a student's seminar attendance is less than 70%, they will not be eligible to receive an accumulative assessment at the end of the course. Should a student miss over 30 percent of the classes, they will be advised to retake the course. If a student does not take the midterm test and/or fails to deliver the presentation, they will be denied the right to submit the term paper.
Mid-term test (theory)	**20 %**	April	Ability to define stance and identify its types and expressions in discourse. Comment on the relation of stance to modal and discourse markers. The maximum evaluation of a test is 10 points.
Presentation	**20 %**	May	Ability to formulate and motivate the research question based on the literature under study. Ability to design appropriate methodology, report the qualitative and quantitative findings of the research, and draw relevant conclusions. The maximum evaluation of a presentation is 10 points.
Writing a term paper (2,500-3000 words)	**60 %**	May 21st	Ability to present the research question, provide a comprehensive literature review, describe data and methods, report and interpret the qualitative and quantitative findings of the research, and draw concluding remarks. Proper use of metalanguage and grammatical accuracy. Structure + content (40 %). Language use + academic conventions (20 %). The maximum evaluation of a term paper is 10 points.
			Additional remarks: Course instructors reserve the right to modify homework assignments, the sequence of seminar topics, and the dates of seminars outlined in the course syllabus to facilitate students' learning and make up for missed seminars or topics that were not covered due to students' poor preparation for seminars, etc.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
Aijmer, Karin	2008	*At the interface between grammar and discourse: A corpus-based study of some pragmatic markers.*	*Pragmatics and corpus linguistics,* edited by Jesús Romero-Trillo, 11-36.	*Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter*
Biber, Douglas	2006	*Stance in spoken and written university registers*	*Journal of English for Academic Purposes,* 97-116.	

Biber, Douglas, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad, Edward Finegan	2021	*Grammar of spoken and written English*		John Benjamins Publishing Company
Crible, Ludivine	2017	*Towards an operational category of discourse markers: A definition and its model*	*Pragmatic Markers, Discourse Markers and Modal Particles: New Perspectives*, edited by Fedriani Chiara, Sansó Andrea, 99–124.	John Benjamins Publishing Company
Facchinetti, Roberta	2013	*Modal verbs in news related blogs: When the blogger counts*	*English Modality Core, Periphery and Evidentiality*, edited by Juana I. Marín-Arrese , Marta Carretero, Jorge Arús Hita and Johan van der Auwera, 359-377.	John Benjamins Publishing Company
Huddleston, Rodney, Geoffrey K. Pullum	2002	*The Cambridge grammar of the English language*		Cambridge University Press
Huddleston, Rodney, Geoffrey K. Pullum	2005	A Student's Introduction to English Grammar		Cambridge: CUP
Ruskan, Anna	2020	*Attitudinal and Epistemic Dimensions of Evaluation: Form, Meaning and Discursive Contexts*		Vilnius: Vilnius University Press
Šinkūnienė, Jolanta, Linara Bartkuvienė		*How to Write a Research Paper in Linguistics, Literature, and Cultural Studies*		
Optional reading				
Engelbretson, Robert.	2007	*Introduction*	*Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction*, edited by Robert Englebretson, 1-25.	John Benjamins Publishing Company
Gray, Bethany, Douglas Biber	2015	*Stance markers*	*Corpus Pragmatics: A Handbook,* edited by Karin Aijmer and Christoph Rühlemann, 219-248.	Cambridge University Press
Usonienė, Aurelija	2016	*Reikšmės pasaulis: tekstynais paremti semantiniai kalbų tyrimai*		Vilnius: Akademinė leidyba

The course description was updated on November 20, 2025.