



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Introduction to Psycholinguistics / Įvadas į psicholingvistiką	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
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Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
1 st cycle	Elective

Mode of delivery	The period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Seminars		English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: <i>English C1</i>	Additional requirements (if any):

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	125	32	93

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed and learning outcomes
<p>The purpose of the course is to develop students' awareness and understanding of how the brain and the mind process language. To achieve this goal, the student will be provided with a broad overview of sub-fields of psycholinguistics such as language and the brain, animal communication vs. human communication, the cognitive basis of language, bilingualism, language disorders, the structure of the sentences, lexicon, comprehension, productive and receptive language skills. The student will also gain hands-on experience of experimental methods and learn to read published research critically and analytically.</p> <p><u>Generic competences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Responsibility:</u> reading the assigned chapters and papers ahead of the seminars, attending the seminars, asking questions, posing problems, monitoring one's learning process • <u>Cooperation:</u> seeing learning as a cooperative process implemented in some of the in-class activities and optionally in the final assignment (see Assessment strategies) • <u>Problem-solving:</u> considering alternative interpretations of results, finding methodological solutions with the resources available • <u>Openness to change:</u> some of the topics and the general methodology of psycholinguistics may appear at 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><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);

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) 	
Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Individual study, group and pair discussion, practical tasks and activities, multimedia materials, answering sets of pre-assigned questions prior to each seminar	Mid-term test (35%) Experimental report (65%)

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. The status of psycholinguistics. Aims, research areas and short history of the discipline.	2		0				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 brain structure and function. Localisation and lateralization. Lesion studies.	1		1				2	7	Harley (2014), 17-21 (Ch. 1); Warren (2011), 9-10 (Ch. 1); 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			1				1	4	Steinberg (2001), 276-307; Altgassen et al (2014)
6. Language and animals. Animal communication and teaching human language to animals: apes, dolphins, parrots.			1				1	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, randomization, 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, 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, structure of 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.
Total	8		24				32	93	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Assessment criteria
Mid-term test	35%	In-class test. Tasks include, but are not limited to: true/false statements,

(17 th Nov)		<p>multiple choices, gap filling, matching terms and definitions, discussing ideas and paraphrasing parts of research articles. Similar tasks will be practiced throughout the seminars. Answers will be assessed for relevant content and coherence of argumentation.</p> <p>PASS is set at 18/35 pts.</p>
1,500-word experimental report based on the replication of an existing study (9 th January)	65%	<p>Students choose one out of three psycholinguistic papers provided by the lecturer and try to replicate it in a simplified manner. Examples from past years will be provided beforehand, and there will be a few seminars devoted to clarifying doubts and discussing ideas (see breakdown of topics section).</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, appendixes – 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-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.</p> <p>(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, =</p>

		48/100 is not a pass until the test is passed in the retake) Overall table of conversion: 93-100 = 10; 85-92 = 9; 75-84 = 8; 65-74 = 7; 64-55 = 6; 54-48 = 5
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Retake policy

The retake can involve either the class test or the experimental report or both, depending on the part that has been failed according to the thresholds indicated above. The mid-term test retake will take place on 16 December 2023 during class time. The report retake will take place in the first half of February 2023.

The policy applies to home students and international students alike. Exceptional cases/circumstances need to be discussed directly with the lecturers well in advance of the end of the course.

Retakes are only allowed for students failing the exam, not to improve one's grade. See section above for the minimum score required for a pass.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Recommended reading	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory 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-Sánchez, A., Vilkaitė, L.	2020	<i>What eye-tracking tells us about reading-only and reading-while-listening in a first and second language</i>	(Full article)	Second Language Research 36(3), 257-276
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
Optional 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</i>		London: Routledge

		<i>Concepts</i>		
Jackendoff, R.	1993	<i>Patterns in the Mind</i>		Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead.
Pinker, S.	2000	<i>The Language Instinct</i>		Penguin, Harmondsworth.

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