

COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Course unit title	Research field, branch, code	Faculty	Department, Institute
Psycholinguistics	Philology, Linguistics, H004	Philology	Centre for Multilingual Studies

Study cycle	3 rd (doctoral)
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Mode of delivery	ECTS credits	Type of the course unit	Language of instruction
Contact (lectures, workshops, tutorials)	8		
Individual or in a group			

Annotation of the course content
This course of Psycholinguistics provides an overview of the main contemporary psycholinguistic theories on how we perceive and produce language. The course aims to help doctoral students critically analyze the latest experimental research and interpret it, taking into account the existing theories. Therefore, the course is intended not only for those planning to conduct psycholinguistic (or experimental) research for their thesis, but also for those who want to gain a better theoretical understanding of how we perceive, produce, and learn language. The course consists of two parts: preparation for reading experimental descriptions and critical reviews of theories summarizing experimental research. In the first part of the course, doctoral students will learn about the logic of preparing and conducting experiments (such as reaction time, eye-tracking, functional magnetic resonance imaging, electroencephalography, and other studies, learn to interpret the results of statistical analysis, and delve into the issues of the external and internal validity of experimental studies. Doctoral students will meet individually (or in groups) for consultations to discuss in detail the procedures, advantages, limitations, and validity of two selected studies. Doctoral students will have to choose studies for discussion themselves from the following journals: - <i>Applied Psycholinguistics</i>. Cambridge University Press - <i>Journal of Psycholinguistic Research</i>. Springer - <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition</i>, American Psychological Association - <i>Bilingualism: Language and Cognition</i>. Cambridge University Press - <i>Cognition</i>. Science Direct. In the second part of the course, doctoral students will be asked to choose one theoretical topic and explore it in depth. They will review the relevant textbooks, focus on the controversial aspects of the target topic, review recent publications, and identify what alternative theories exist. Suggested theoretical course topics (to choose from): 1. Language and the brain. Neurological and biological basis for language and speech. 2. The evolution of language: what we know about it and how we recreate it experimentally in the laboratory. 3. The critical period of language acquisition in the first language acquisition and the second language acquisition. 4. Language and thought. Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity and how it is explored experimentally. 5. First language acquisition: approaches of generative grammar and usage-based linguistics.

6. Bilingualism and second language acquisition. Code-switching, interference, and models of bilingual mental lexicon.
7. Theories of word meaning. Meaning in the mental lexicon.
8. Lexical processing: word recognition, mental lexicon, formulaic language.
9. Morphologically complex words. Models of morphological processing.
10. Syntactic processing. Garden path and constraint-based models.
11. Discourse processing. Implications, figurative meaning, and schemas.
12. Language reception and production. Development of reading ability. Dyslexia. Differences between listening and reading. Writing and speaking. Challenges in researching language production.

The doctoral student will have to prepare a public presentation (in a seminar/lecture/reading group) on the chosen topic. During the presentation, the doctoral student should review the current situation and the most relevant research on the topic. The presentation should not be limited to a summary of the research. Instead, the doctoral student should provide a critical assessment of the research discussed and a reasoned personal position.

The **course assessment** consists of two parts:

- A critical discussion with the supervising lecturer on two experimental studies published in psycholinguistics journals over the past five years (mandatory for admission to the final assessment)
- A 20-minute oral presentation and a follow-up discussion on a selected theoretical topic

Reading

Main handbooks:

Gillioz, C., & Zufferey, S. (2020). *Introduction to experimental linguistics*. John Wiley & Sons.

Harley, T. A. (2013). *The psychology of language: From data to theory*. Psychology press.

Main literature on the suggested topics:

Ambridge, B. (2020). Against stored abstractions: A radical exemplar model of language acquisition. *First Language*, 40(5-6), 509-559.

Casserly, E. D., & Pisoni, D. B. (2010). Speech perception and production. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, 1(5), 629-647.

Friederici, A. D. (2011). The brain basis of language processing: from structure to function. *Physiological reviews*, 91(4), 1357-1392.

Joanisse, M. F., & McClelland, J. L. (2015). Connectionist perspectives on language learning, representation and processing. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, 6(3), 235-247.

Stevens, P., & Plaut, D. C. (2022). From decomposition to distributed theories of morphological processing in reading. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 29(5), 1673-1702.

Sparks, J. R., & Rapp, D. N. (2010). Discourse processing—examining our everyday language experiences. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*, 1(3), 371-381.

Wheeldon, L. R., & Konopka, A. (2023). *Grammatical encoding for speech production*. Cambridge University Press.

Lecturer	Degree	Main works in the research field published during the last five years
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Laura Vilkaitė-Lozdienė	Doctor of the Humanities	Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L., & Vilkienė, L. (2023). Vocabulary size estimates for Lithuanian native speakers: Is it possible to talk about L1 vocabulary size cross-linguistically?. <i>ITL-International Journal of Applied Linguistics</i>, 174(2), 177-201. Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L. (2022). Do different morphological forms of collocations show comparable processing facilitation?. <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition</i>, 48(9), 1328. (Pellicer Sanchez, A., Conklin, K., & Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L. (2022). (Re) Examining the benefits of pre-reading instruction for vocabulary learning. <i>TESOL Quarterly</i>, 56(1), 363-375. Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L., & Conklin, K. (2021). Word order effect in collocation processing. <i>The Mental Lexicon</i>, 16(2-3), 362-396. Pellicer-Sánchez, A., Conklin, K., & Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L. (2021). The effect of pre-reading instruction on vocabulary learning: An investigation of L1 and L2 readers' eye movements. <i>Language Learning</i>, 71(1), 162-203.
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Approved by decision of Doctoral Committee (date, record No) October 10, 2025. Minutes of meeting No. (7.17 E) 15600-KT-530

Chair of Doctoral Committee Prof. Dr Daiva Aliūkaitė