UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psycholinguistics

2122-2-E2004P009

Learning area

Learning Area 1: Study of communication modalities

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- analysis and comprehension of linguistic (lexical, syntactic, semantic) ambiguity within a language processing perspective
- mechanisms underlying the parsing of words and sentences and mechanisms of processing
- comprehension of implicit content (including figures of speech used for different communication goals)
- analysis of the experimental methodologies used in the investigation of the mechanisms involved in language processing

Applying knowledge and understanding

- analysis and comprehension of linguistic (lexical, syntactic, semantic) ambiguity within a language processing perspective.
- mechanisms underlying the parsing of words and sentences and mechanisms of processing
- comprehension of implicit content (including figures of speech used for different communication goals)
- analysis of the experimental methodologies used in the investigation of the mechanisms involved in language processing
- exploitation of linguistic ambiguity in special contexts (e.g., ads, brand naming, comics)

Contents

The course provides a comprehensive overview of the mechanisms underlying the processing of language focusing on (i) the different models of language processing; (ii) the different experimental techniques and paradigms used in psycholinguistic research; (iii) the processing of ambiguity and its use in special communicative situations (for example, in advertisement, journalism, comics).

Detailed program

Theories of lexical access

Models of parsing
Experimental methods and techniques used to investigate language processing
Discussion of experimental research questions about the use and processing of language
Parsing strategies in processing linguistic ambiguities and their effects on the use of language in communication
Models of comprehension of figures of speech and their use in ads

Prerequisites

Previous attendance of the courses of Linguistics and Philosophy of Language (1st year obligatory courses) is required, thus some basic notions of language structure (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics) are taken for granted. Students lacking such basic knowledge should contact the instructor at the beginning of the course.

Teaching methods

Lectures; individual or collective practice exercises; discussions of experimental works in scientific papers.

Lessons will be held in presence, unless further COVID-19-related restrictions are imposed.

Assessment methods

The exam is written and comprises:

- open questions in order to assess the acquisition of theoretical notions and the ability to extend this competence to cases of real communication;

- multiple choice questions in order to assess the acquisition of theoretical basic notions;

- the analysis of one of the graphs discussed in class, in order to assess the ability to interpret and discuss psycholinguistic data, as well as their theoretical impact on models of parsing;

- a series of exercises in which the student is required to extend the knowledge acquired to real examples of use of language

A written examination will be offered at the end of the course (in December).

The modality of such exam will be updated in accordance with the rules for COVID-19 emergency.

Upon student's request, the exam can be completed with an oral examination that will increase or decrease the mark obtained in the written part up to 2 points. The oral exam will start from the discussion of the written test and will cover all the topics discussed in class during the course.

International students can take the exam in English and prepare on English textbooks/articles.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Bibliography includes class materials published in elearning (slides and scientific reports)

Although classes will be taught in Italian, international students can take the exam in English.
In this case, the bibliography will include:
Julie Sedivy (2019). *Language in mind: An introduction to psycholinguistics*. Sinauer Associates (selected chapters - available as EBOOK from the library)
Paul Warren (2015). Introducing Psycholinguistics (selected chapters - available as EBOOK from the library)