UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cognition and Language

2122-1-F9201P100

Aims

Knowledge and understanding

This course presents the main models and theories related to:

- Elements of phonetics and phonology
- Social meaning of words;
- Sentence comprehension processes;
- Readability, comprehensibility, reading processes and reading deficits;
- Pragmatic aspects of language

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding

Students will be able to constantly adopt, in the design, evaluation and management of communication systems, a user-centered perspective, considering the different characteristics, types and needs of the target, and the different contexts of use. In particular:

- Ability to use linguistic and communicative knowledge to effectively convey a message
- Ability to recognize and critically evaluate the persuasive uses of language
- Ability to evaluate the complexity of the texts, to simplify them according to the target, and to be aware of the type of simplification
- Ability to critically evaluate, on the basis of scientific information, statements about language in its various forms and some deficits related to written language

Contents

The course will discuss if and how particular linguistic expressions and constructions have an impact on how people conceptualize a problem, and if this might influence their behavior (for example, preferring some options rather than others). The consequences of these notions will be discussed in practical areas, such as brand naming, the modalities of customer communication, persuasiveness. Furthermore, the reading processes and the problems connected to the written text will be evaluated.

Detailed program

- The sounds of language, sound symbolism and brandnaming;
- Social meaning of words, inclusive language and tone of voice;
- Sentences, focus and attention
- Speech acts and politeness

- Metaphor and irony in communication
- Text comprehension processes
- Reading processes, readability and reading deficits

Prerequisites

Good knowledge of English.

Teaching form

Besides traditional lessons dedicated to the transmission of theoretical notions, the teaching methods include the discussion of scientific papers, videos and documentaries. Spetial attention is devoted to the analysis and discussion of case studies.

Students who attend lessons with assiduity may deepen some topics of the course, with exercises and essays.

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

Textbook and teaching resource

Teaching resources will be indicated on the e-learning page.

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Semester

First semester

Assessment method

The exam is written, with multiple choice questions, open questions, and exercises. The oral exam is upon students' request. Regularly attending students may do exercises during the semester, and write an essay on the topics related to the teaching. These exercises and essays might concur to the final evaluation of the exam.

Office hours

The student can contact the teachers by email in order to fix an appointment