UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Philosophy of Mind, Logic and Natural Language Structure

2324-2-E2401P006

Learning area

Cross-disciplinary knowledge

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding
• Distinctive features of human language and animal communication systems
• Principal theories about the origin and evolution of language
• Theoretical and experimental approaches to the relationship between language and thought

Applying knowledge and understanding
• Assessment, synthesis and critical evaluation of theoretical debates
• Critical reading of scientific articles
• Identification of lexical and structural ambiguities

Contents

This class adopts an interdisciplinary approach to the debate about the origin and evolution of language, and its relationship with thought, with notions of evolutionary biology, philosophy of mind and of language, and linguistics.

Detailed program

• The distinctive features of human language.
• Animal communication systems.
• Homo sapiens and other human species.
• The evolution of language.
• The parameters of language variation.
• Language and its relationship with biology and society.
• Language and cognition.
• Language and categorization.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

Teaching methods

In addition to classroom lectures, part of the teaching will take place through the discussion of scientific articles, and audio-visual material (documentaries).
The material (slides and, when possible, scientific articles and videos) is made available on the e-learning site of the course, so that it can also be used by non-attending students.

Assessment methods

The exam is written, and it comprises forced choice questions and open questions.
The forced choice questions aim at ascertaining the effective acquisition of theoretical notions; open questions require the ability to assess, synthesize and evaluate theoretical debates, and to critically read scientific articles.
The evaluation criteria are: the correctness of the answers, the ability to argue, synthesize, create links, and critically read what was learnt.
There will be in itinere examinations reserved to students who regularly attend the course (two written tests). Participating to optional activities contributes to final evaluation.
Although this course is held in Italian, Erasmus students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

There is no textbook. The materials needed for the exam will all be uploaded to the elearning site of this class.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | REDUCED INEQUALITIES