UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psycholinguistics of Spoken and Signed Languages

2627-2-E2007P012

Learning area

Acquiring language skills in LIS, LIST and Italian

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding
• linguistic modalities: a comparison between spoken language e sign language processing
• analysis of the experimental methodologies used in the investigation of the mechanisms involved in language processing
• language processing in bilingual individuals: a comparison between unimodal and bimodal bilingualism

Applying knowledge and understanding
• critical analysis of scientific texts
• detailed analysis of descriptive results (graphs)
• formulation of research hypotheses and analysis of behavioural data (reading times, reaction times, implicit processing measures, e.g. eye movement recording data)

Judgement autonomy
Development of critical evaluation skills regarding theoretical models, experimental data, and methodological approaches in the study of spoken and signed language processing. Increased awareness of the cognitive and linguistic characteristics of unimodal and bimodal bilingualism, with attention to intercultural and inclusive perspectives.

Communication skills
Consolidation of the ability to present theoretical concepts and experimental results in the field of psycholinguistics in a clear and accessible manner.

Learning skills
Reinforcement of autonomous learning through the critical analysis of scientific texts and experimental findings. Acquisition of tools to understand, interpret, and formulate research hypotheses, with a focus on behavioral data and quantitative methods in the study of human language across modalities.

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) different populations (monolinguals, bilinguals); (iv) different linguistic modalities (spoken languages / sign languages)

Detailed program

1. Theories of lexical access (in monolinguals and bilinguals) in spoken languages and sign languages: focus on perceptual phenomena, language comprehension and language production
2. Experimental tools and methods for investigating language processing: behavioural experiments; use of eye-trackers; the ERP technique
3. Discussion of research questions related to language use and processing

Prerequisites

I assume previous attendance of the course of Linguistics of Spoken and Sign Languages (1st year obligatory course), 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.

For the academic year 2026/2027 it will not be possible to select this course as a single-course entry.
Exam not selectable from the study plan by students not enrolled in Interpretariato e Traduzione in Lingua dei Segni Italiana (LIS) e Lingua dei Segni Italiana Tattile (LIST) *(Italian Sign Language (LIS) and Tactile Italian Sign Language (LIST) Interpretation)*.

Teaching methods

Delivered Didactics (lectures) : 36 hours
Interactive Didactics (group work): 7 hours

Assessment methods

The examination is oral and includes an interview aimed at assessing the acquisition of the main theoretical

aspects discussed in the classroom and a discussion on a topic chosen by the student.
International students can take the exam in English and prepare on English textbooks/articles.

Evaluation:

30 with Honors (Lode): Excellent. Comprehensive knowledge and outstanding critical thinking skills.

27–29: Very Good. Thorough knowledge and accurate use of academic terminology.

25–26: Good. Solid knowledge and a clear, well-structured presentation of topics.

22–24: Fair. Generally sound knowledge with occasional inaccuracies or limited depth.

18–21: Satisfactory (Pass). Superficial knowledge and noticeable gaps in presentation or delivery.

< 18: Fail. Lack of knowledge or severe deficiencies in the subject matter.

No partial exams are scheduled.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Giustolisi B., Psicolinguistica delle lingue dei segni. Aspetti di universalità e specificità nell'accesso al lessico. 2022, Raffaello Cortina Editore
Further reference articles will be indicated on e-learning during the lecture period

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | REDUCED INEQUALITIES