UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Linguistics of Spoken and Signed Languages

2627-1-E2007P003

Learning area

Acquisition of knowledge on the structures of Italian, LIS and LIST

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding
• Distinctive features of human language
• Debate on the iconic and arbitrary nature of language
• Elements of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics of LIS

Ability to apply knowledge and understanding
• Ability to evaluate, summarize, and comment on theoretical debates
• Ability to critically read scientific articles
• Ability to reflect on the effects of modality on language

Autonomy of judgment
Development of critical analysis, evaluation, and synthesis skills for complex ideas related to the following topics:
Acquisition of knowledge about linguistic structures common to spoken and sign languages
Acquisition of knowledge about the impact of acoustic or visual modalities on language ability
Elements of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics of LIS

Communication skills
Development of the ability to communicate clearly and consciously the results of theoretical reflection on language to specialist and non-specialist interlocutors, including in interdisciplinary and multilingual contexts.
Enhancement of collaboration and critical discussion skills, including in multilingual working groups

Learning skills

Strengthening of independent learning skills through critical analysis of linguistic data and in-depth study of the main theoretical debates on language structures from a multimodal perspective

Contents

The course provides an introduction to linguistics by taking a comparative approach between spoken and marked languages. The main concepts of the different domains of linguistics, historically based on spoken languages, will be put to the test of signed languages and modified and supplemented where necessary.

Detailed program

- Aspects of sign language lexicology: productive and frozen vocabulary
- Basics of the phonology of sign languages and spoken languages
- Basics of the morphology of sign languages and spoken languages
- Basics of the syntax of sign languages and spoken languages
- Basics of the semantics of sign languages and spoken languages
- The peculiarities of the sociolinguistics of sign languages

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of LIS is assumed.

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

Lectures will introduce theoretical concepts through the systematic use of videos. Some lectures will be conducted LIS, others in Italian. This teaching component (approximately 70%) of the course will be supplemented by workshop activities supervised by the instructor, which will be facilitated by the limited number of students in the class. Part of the classes introducing theoretical concepts may be taught online.

Assessment methods

There are no mid-term exams.

The exam, which will be partly written and partly signed, aims at verifying the effective acquisition of theoretical knowledge and its application to concrete cases. The evaluation criteria are: the correctness of answers, the ability

to argue, synthesize, make connections and critically read the notions learned.

Verification criteria and assessment thresholds:
30 with honors: excellent performance, both in terms of knowledge and critical and expressive articulation.
30: very good performance; comprehensive knowledge, well articulated and correctly expressed, with some critical insights.
27-29: good performance; comprehensive and satisfactory knowledge; essentially correct expression.
24-26: fair performance; knowledge present in the essential points, but not comprehensive and not always articulated correctly.
21-23: sufficient performance; knowledge present in a sometimes superficial way, but the general thread is understood.
18-21: barely sufficient performance; knowledge present but superficial; the thread is not understood consistently.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Detailed information about the course materials will be posted on the e-learning page associated with the course.

Sustainable Development Goals

REDUCED INEQUALITIES