

# Psychology of Language

## Brief description of course content (according to the programme's verification report)

### Descriptors:

- Language processes. Language acquisition. Relationship between thought and language. The brain and language.

### Contents:

- Aspects and principles of language and communication.
- Language perception and understanding.
- Language production and conversational interaction.
- Language acquisition.
- Relationship between language, cognition and culture.
- Communication skills.

## Learning outcomes

To understand the functions, characteristics and limitations of the different theoretical models of Psychology of Language. To understand the communicative function of language and its implications. To understand the basic aspects of language processes: perception, comprehension, memory and language production. To be able to describe the psychological processes involved in language. To understand and properly use the basic principles of Psychology of Language.

### The student will know/ understand:

- The general reference theoretical framework where the Psychology of Language research and content are located.
- The contexts where language occurs: communicative contexts, communication methods and cognitive context.
- The mental processes which permit language planning, production, perception and understanding and its cerebral implementation.

### The student will be able to:

- Analyse and interpret the results of Psychology of Language research.
- Use the relevant documentary sources in Psychology with the capacity of critical analysis and synthesis as well as keeping the skills and knowledge required for the profession up-to-date.
- Evaluate and assess the contributions of scientific research to professional practice and knowledge.
- Use the knowledge acquired for the purposes of effective professional communication and to resolve practical communication problems in different settings.

## **Planned learning activities**

### **Theory Syllabus**

The following **list of topics** is indicative. During the progression of the module, some will be emphasised more than others, depending on various factors including the option chosen (option 1: available with Julio Santiago and Marc Ouellet in groups A and B, respectively; option 2: available with Francisco Tornay in groups C and D), time organisation and students' interests.

Group I.- GENERAL ISSUES  
1.- Introduction to language, communication and psycholinguistics.

Group II.- COMMUNICATION  
3.- Communication in context. Discourse. Conversational interaction.  
4.- Different types of language. Communication problems in different contexts.

Group III.- LANGUAGE PROCESSING AND REPRESENTATION  
5.- Proposals. Literal and non-literal meaning.  
6.- Syntax. Sentence comprehension and production.  
7.- Phonology. Word, syllable and phoneme comprehension and production.  
8.- The mental lexicon.

GROUP IV.- LANGUAGE EVOLUTION AND ACQUISITION. CULTURE, COGNITION AND LANGUAGE  
9.- Language evolution.  
10.- Language acquisition processes.  
11.- Language, culture and cognition

The **teaching methodology** will vary depending on the option chosen:

Option 1 (lecturer Julio Santiago, group A):

The general syllabus shown above will be divided into a series of brief topics. The topics will be taught using the Flipped Classroom methodology: 1) before starting to make contact with a topic, students answer some questions on the basic concepts they are going to study; 2) students read materials and watch videos developed by the module teacher on the topic; 3) in theoretical classes, questions are answered, exercises on the topic undertaken and the answers debated.

Option 2 (Marc Ouellet, group B):

The general syllabus shown above will be divided into a series of brief topics. Each topic will be explained in an hour's master class and will be supported by self-assessment questionnaires, both on PRADO and in class. At the end of each topic, students should write a reflection on the topic.

Option 3 (lecturer Francisco Tornay, groups C and D):

The methodology is based on Socratic seminars, workshops of practical skills and a class blog. A Socratic seminar is a discussion based on background material, in this case

reading related to the subject, which the whole class will participate in. The discussion will have an oral and a written part. The discussion is not based on debates, but rather on deliberation, which means the emphasis is not on dealing with positions but on reaching agreements, frequently of a practical kind (for example, what to do in the face of a specific problem). Open questions on different theoretical and aspects and application of Psychology of Language will also be discussed.

## **Practical Syllabus**

Options 1 and 2 (lecturers Julio Santiago and Marc Ouellet groups A and B respectively):

- Scientific writing workshop: how to write non-fiction texts by applying this to an informative essay on a current issue in Psychology of Language.
- Practical exercise on fake news: how to detect it and what we can do to fight against fake news, applying this to real examples.
- Practice of communication skills applied to announcing bad news: what the SPYKES protocol is, and practice through role playing on how to apply it to specific cases where the psychologist must give their client bad news.

Option 3 (lecturer Francisco Tornay, groups C and D):

In workshops, skills related to the Psychology of Language are practised through exercises: listening skills, conversation analysis skills, psychotherapeutic techniques skills related to language from various perspectives. Some of the workshops and seminars will be directed by the teacher and others prepared and presented by groups of students. The teacher will guide these groups prior to the presentation, in directed academic activity sessions. Under the teacher's guidance, in the practical workshops students will complete specific analysis and intervention works in communication problems. All discussions and activities will be undertaken both orally in class and in writing on the class blog.