Course description

Name: Cognitive Processes in Copying a Text

Semester: Autumn 2014

Duration: 5 working days

Course code:

Credits (ECTS): 5

Faculty: Faculty of Arts and Education, University of Stavanger

Department: Department of Cultural Studies and Languages and National Centre for Reading Education and Research

Conveners:
Aidan Conti, associate professor, University of Bergen
Christer Johansson, professor, University of Bergen
Guido Nottbusch, professor, University of Potsdam
Jacob Thaisen, associate professor, University of Stavanger [coordinator]
Joanna Nykiel, assistant professor, University of Silesia
Per Henning Uppstad, associate professor, University of Stavanger

Language of instruction: English

Learning outcomes:

Knowledge
Students develop an understanding of:
- principles of language comprehension, including memory retrieval
- principles of language production
- links between language comprehension and language production
- transformations a medieval text undergoes in the process of copying by a scribe
- methodologies for investigating online sentence comprehension
- methodologies for investigating online language production
Skills
By the end of the course students will be able to:
- design studies and experiments that probe comprehension and/or production of specific linguistic phenomena
- interpret data collected through studies of language production and/or comprehension
- interpret linguistic variation found in medieval manuscript data

Competencies
By the end of the course students will be able to:
- formulate research questions relating to any aspect of language production and/or comprehension
- design and conduct an empirical investigation of any aspect of language production and/or comprehension, and analyze its results
- address questions raised by historical linguistics/philology from a new interdisciplinary perspective

Content:
The focus of the course is on exploring cognitive processes involved in copying written text. It is informed by research on how language users comprehend and produce oral or written text, as well as on how the combination of language comprehension and production is reflected in the task of copying written text. We will discuss insights into production and comprehension behavior gained from psycholinguistic experimentation using modern tools of investigation, such as eye tracking and key logging. We will then address the question of what cognitive constraints might operate on a person as they copy written text. We will do so by drawing on existing work in historical linguistics/philology which has explored the nature of linguistic variation found in scribal copies of medieval texts. In particular, our focus will be on how large a segment of text is being held in working memory and recalled from it in the process of copying, and whether the size of this segment may be affected by the linguistic features of the text being copied and/or the nonlinguistic features of the copying situation. The course will thus offer new interdisciplinary ways of linking historical linguistics/philology and psycholinguistic research.

Exam/Assessment:

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<td>Two written essays</td>
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<td>Pass–Fail</td>
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Two short essays (each 3,000 words ± 10 percent, excluding bibliography and footnotes) addressing topics agreed with the course conveners. Both essays are assessed on a pass/fail basis. The student has the possibility to revise and resubmit an essay until the contents are satisfactory.

In addition, the student should demonstrate his/her command of the material through active participation in the workshops.

Coursework requirements:
Attendance at the sessions is obligatory. A student who, for whatever reason, is absent from 25% or more of the sessions will not be permitted to submit the essays. The student has to be present for at least 2/3 of the duration of a session for attendance to be recorded. In addition, the student has to hand in the two essays in a timely manner.

Format
The taught part of the course comprises a series of workshops over a period of five working days. The essays are individually supervised and are due some three weeks after the end of course.

Open to
Students enrolled on a doctoral programme. Applicants may be turned down due limitations on the number of places (20).

Course assessment
The course conveners will seek feedback from the participants on the quality of the course, both continuously during the course and at its end. A written report will be sent to the faculty.

Reading list:


Sausset, S., E. Lambert, and T. Olive. 2013. Flexibility of
orthographic and graphomotor coordination during a handwritten copy task: Effect of time pressure. Frontiers in Psychology 4: 1-8


GRAND TOTAL 514