

Speech acts in discourse and interaction

In the context of LAND: Doctoral Programme in Applied Linguistics: Managing Languages, Arguments and Narratives in the Datafied Society (LAND)

Details

- Dates: 6-7 March 2025 (from 9am to 4.30pm, including breaks)
- Place: USI Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano, Room TBA
- Course lecturers:
Dr. Claudia Coppola (Postdoc assistant at Università della Svizzera Italiana)
Guest lecturer: Prof. Marina Sbisà (Università degli Studi di Trieste)
Guest lecturer: Prof. Paolo Labinaz (Università degli Studi di Trieste)
- 1,5 ECTS
- **Deadline for enrolment: 24 February 2025**

Description

Speech acts are the key to understand the way we interact and co-construct meaning. Not by chance, they represent one of the core areas of pragmatics and the starting point of some contemporary theories of argumentation. Linguistic action does not only mean 'doing something' through words (e.g. promising, accusing, apologising etc.); instead, speech acts bring about illocutionary effects by involving a whole set of facets such as reasoning, responsibility, (contextual, cultural etc.) norms, interpersonal relations and the functioning of institutions.

Understanding these dimensions is therefore necessary for the in-depth study of discourse and conversation – including argumentative discussions – and for a more conscious look at relevant phenomena in modern society such as polarization, power imbalance and persuasion.

This course addresses speech acts as they were conceived in philosophy of language, pragmatics and argumentation theory, focussing on crucial theoretical aspects and applying these concepts to the practical analysis of contemporary discourse, especially in the domain of online communication.

Prior to the course, students will be given some mandatory preparatory readings. During the course, which hosts prominent scholars in the field as guest lecturers, theoretical sessions will be integrated with data sessions to delve into the interactions, activity types and genres that appear in the datasets of the PhDs' research from the point of view of speech act theory. After the course, students will be required to hand in a short essay summarizing a sample qualitative analysis of data of their choice. The main goal of the course, therefore, is to provide (both novice and advanced) PhD students with a robust theoretical scaffolding for the observation of a variety of phenomena at the intersection of language and interaction.

Requirements for the awarding of 1.5 ECTS:

- Preparatory readings
- Presence (no less than 80%)
- Active participation throughout the course
- Short essay to be handed in after the course (evaluation: pass/fail)

More detailed information (e.g. preparatory materials, schedule, short essay) will be provided at a later time.

Enrolment

The deadline for enrolment is **24 February 2025**. PhD students from USI can enroll via the dedicated platform. PhD students from other institutions can enroll by sending an e-mail to: narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch.

Participation in the course is free and open to all people interested. The LAND Doctoral Programme provides financial support to PhD students participating in the Programme and to other PhD students based in Switzerland.

Participation in the previous course on implicit meaning does not represent a prerequisite for enrolment.

For any questions please contact claudia.coppola@usi.ch or narjes.sheikh.asadi@usi.ch.