Course description

Course title: Law and language, the plain language movement	**Neptune code of course:** AJJOEERASMUS02
	Institute offering the course: Institute of Legal History and Jurisprudence
	Course type: optional
Course coordinator: Vinnai, Edina PhD	
Teaching staff involved: -	
Recommended semester: spring/autumn	**Precondition:** -
Number of lessons/week: 2 hours/week	**Acknowledgement of course completion:** colloquium
Credit value: 5	**Training format (part-time/full-time):** part-time/full time

Aim and content of course:
The course focuses on the interdisciplinary field of law and language based on the main results of the international 'law and language movement' in the USA and in Europe. Empirical research results in forensic linguistics, in courtroom studies and the plain language movement will be discussed in details.

Competences to be developed:
knowledge: T3, T4, T5

ability: K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8

attitude: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6

autonomy and responsibility: F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6

Thematic description of course content:
1. Linguistics and legal sciences
2. Structural linguistics
3. Study of language usage
4. Legal semantics
5. Legal pragmatics
6. Sociolinguistics
7. The 'law and language movement'
8. 'Law and language' in a narrow sense
9. Forensic linguistics
10. Courtroom studies
11. Discourse analysis
12. 'Law and language' in a broader sense
13. The 'plain language' movement
14. Plain language as a guarantee of fair trial
15. The construction of records in police interrogations and court hearings

Method and evaluation of in-semester assessment: -

Completion requirements and evaluation criteria for seminar grades and exams:
Oral presentation, written exam or essay (by arrangement) on the basis of the determined topics, the obligatory readings and the materiel of the lectures.

There is a five-scale grading (1-5) where the thresholds are determined as follows: 0-60% fail, 61-70% pass, 71-80% satisfactory, 81-90% good, 91-100% excellent.

Oral/written exams, or specific methods/practices applied during the course : -

Compulsory literature:
1. Cotterill, Janet (szerk.): *Language in the Legal Process*, Houndmills: Palgrave 2002.
2. O'Barr, William M.: *Linguistic Evidence – Language, Power and Strategy in the Courtroom*, London: Academic Press 1982.
3. Solan, Lawrence – Tiersma, Peter (szerk.): *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012.

Recommended literature:
1. Butters, Ronald: How Not to Strike it Rich: Semantics, Pragmatics, and Semiotics of a Massachusetts Lottery Game Card, *Applied Linguistics* 25 (2004) 466–490.
2. Cotterill, Janet: Collocation, Connotation, and Courtroom Semantics: Lawyers' Control of Witness Testimony through Lexical Negotiation, *Applied Linguistics* 25 (2004) 4. 513–537.
3. Danet, Brenda: „Baby" or „fetus"? Language and the Construction of Reality in a Manslaughter Trial, *Semiotica* 32 (1980) 187–219.