Qualitative Methods in Embodied Cognitive Science

PhD course, University of Granada

DATES	VENUE	APPLICATION DEADLINE
15–17 February 2027	**University of Granada**	**22 January 2027**

Lecturers

Enara Garcia (EG) – University of Southern Denmark

Sarah Bro Trasmundi (SBT) – University of Southern Denmark

Simon Høffding (SH) – Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Manuel Heras Escribano (MHE) – University of Granada

Course description and rationale

The Department of Philosophy at University of Granada and the Iberico-American Society for Embodied and Situated Cognitive Science will host an international 3-day PhD course on "Qualitative Methods in Embodied Cognitive Science". The emphasis in this first edition is on methods tightly connected to enactivism, phenomenology, and ecological psychology.

Scholars in philosophy and related humanistic fields sometimes need to engage in qualitative research methods in order to generate data for their research projects. Yet, they often lack concrete guidance for how to do so. Inversely, scholars in social or health sciences often need to rely on fundamental theory such as phenomenology, enactivism or ecological psychology, but lack access to the philosophical foundations of these lines of thought. In this interdisciplinary PhD course, we offer training and advice on how to integrate qualitative, empirical work (ethnographic observations and qualitative interviews in particular) with foundational theory related to embodied cognition (phenomenology, enactivism, ecological psychology).

The course introduces both the theoretical fields and the empirical methods. This is both at the most general level, but also as applied in case studies from the lecturers' own portfolio concerning psychotherapy, musical absorption, reading, and arctic studies. Moreover, the course offers focused groupwork in which the students discuss why and how to integrate fundamental theory and/or empirical methods in their own projects. We encourage those students who can, to prepare and bring some data to the course. This could be notes from ethnographic fieldwork or interview transcriptions (while keeping your research subjects' anonymity in mind).

Learning outcomes

1. Introductions to phenomenology, enactivism, and ecological psychology.

2. Crash course in empirical methods such as cognitive ethnography and phenomenological interviews.
3. Critical, methodological reflections on why and how to integrate these schools of thought and these methods.
4. Concrete case studies demonstrating successful examples of this integration.
5. Access to resources and networks to understand and develop these lines of research.
6. Application of this kind of interdisciplinary research to one's own project.

Participants

This course is intended for PhD students, but is also suitable for advanced MA students, as well as more senior researchers with an interest in the topic. It is primarily addressed to students and researchers in the humanities (e.g. philosophy, linguistics) and social sciences (e.g. psychology, anthropology, ethnography), but can also be of interest to scholars and practitioners in health science (such as nursing or psychiatry) or in artistic research.

Fee and costs

The course is free of charge, but participants must cover all expenses associated with travel, lodging and meals.

To apply

Please, fill the REGISTRATION FORM

Deadline

Application deadline: January 22nd.

Notification of acceptance or rejection: by January 29th.

Tentative program

15 February

Time	Session	Lecturer
9:30–10:20	Introduction to lecturers, students and the course	
10:20–11:00	Thinking the combination of theory and methods in your research	**SBT**
11:00–11:30	*Coffee break*	
11:30–12:30	Group work: participants present and discuss their projects	
12:30–13:00	Plenary Q&A	
13:00–14:00	*Lunch*	
14:00–15:00	Basics of Enactivism: From cell to social cognition	**EG**
15:00–15:30	Q&A	
15:30–16:00	*Coffee break*	
16:00–16:45	Enactivism, social cognition & Practical case: psychotherapy	**EG**
16:45–17:30	Group work: The use of enactivism in my project?	

Readings

Basic reading: Froese, T., & Di Paolo, E. A. (2011). The enactive approach: Theoretical sketches from cell to society. *Pragmatics & Cognition*, 19(1), 1–36.

Optional reading: Meyer, R., & Brancazio, N. (2023). Enactivism: utopian & scientific. *Constructivist Foundations*, 19(1), 1–11.

16 February

Time	Session	Lecturer
9:00–10:00	Basics of phenomenology	**SH**
10:00–10:30	Q&A	
10:30–11:00	*Coffee break*	
11:00–12:00	Qualitative research methods and the phenomenological interview	**SH**
12:00–13:00	Group work: Qualitative research methods in my project?	
13:00–14:00	*Lunch*	
14:00–15:00	Case study: Music and the body	**SH**
15:00–15:45	Group work: Integrating phenomenology and qualitative research methods?	
15:45–16:15	Q&A	

Time	Session	Lecturer
16:15–16:45	*Coffee break*	
16:45–17:15	Q&A	

Readings

Høffding, S. & Martiny, K. (2016). Framing a phenomenological interview: What, why, and how? *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 15, 539–564.

Køster, A., & Fernandez, A. V. (2023). Investigating modes of being in the world: an introduction to Phenomenologically grounded qualitative research. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 22(1), 149–169. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-020-09723-w

Ravn, S. (2023). Integrating qualitative research methodologies and phenomenology—using dancers' and athletes' experiences for phenomenological analysis. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 22, 107–127. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-021-09735-0

Zahavi, D. (2018). *Phenomenology: The basics*. Routledge.

17 February

Time	Session	Lecturer
9:00–10:00	Basics of ecological psychology	**SBT**
10:00–10:30	Q&A	
10:30–11:00	*Coffee break*	
11:00–12:00	Basics of cognitive ethnography	**SBT**
12:00–13:00	Group work: Cognitive ethnography in my project?	
13:00–14:00	*Lunch*	
14:00–15:00	Case study: Arctic Ecologies	**SBT**
15:00–15:30	Q&A	
15:30–16:00	*Coffee break*	
16:00–17:00	Embodied cognition and convergences between enactivism, phenomenology, and ecological psychology	**MHE**
17:00–17:30	Final Q&A	

Readings

Steffensen, S. V., & Trasmundi, S. B. (2026). Languaging ice ecolinguistics, cognitive ecology, and the perception of climate change in the Arctic. *Journal of World Languages*. https://doi.org/10.1515/jwl-2026-0063

Gibson, J. (1986). *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. New York: Psychology Press. (Chapter 8).