Studies in Cognitive Linguistics

Introduction

Cognitive Linguistics is the most recent and currently also the most innovative discipline in linguistics: in the past 35 years, the Cognitive Linguistics movement has developed a rich and satisfying view of language around a number of foundational principles: language faculties do not constitute a separate module of cognition, but emerge as specialized uses of more general cognitive abilities. Language is fundamentally symbolic (it is all about meaning): natural languages (the lexicon, the morphology, but also the grammar and the syntax) can be described as a structured inventory of conventionalized symbolic units. These structures are flexible and characterized by prototype structure. Next, meaning is equated with conceptualization: it is subjective, anthropomorphic, and crucially incorporates humans' experience with their bodies and the physical and social world around them. Finally, Cognitive Linguistics is also fundamentally usage-based: grammar emerges as the result of generalizations over usage-based encounters and situates the meaning of linguistic expressions in the rich soil of social usage.

Objectives

Students will be introduced to the basic tenets and cornerstones of Cognitive Linguistics and in addition become familiar with a number of new and recent trends in the field. By the end of the course students will know how to handle and use a wide variety of notions and models from the CL theoretical framework and apply these in practice to natural languages.

Contents

1 Cognitive grammar
2 Construction grammar(s)
3 Construal
4 Prototype theory: prototype categories and prototype effects
5 Radial networks and schematic networks
6 Metonymy
7 Image schemas and conceptual metaphor theory
8 Mental spaces and conceptual integration
9 Usage-based cognitive linguistics
10 Recent trends and applications in Cognitive Linguistics

Methodology

This course combines a number of different learning strategies, such as classroom presentations, active participation in debates on the content of recommended articles, and practical analyses of word-forms, utterances or texts.
Basic bibliography


