CCNM17-CN-107:2: Language, cognition, consciusness and their development
Course Description

Aim of the course

Aim of the course: The aim of the course is to give a detailed overview of the relationship between language and cognition within an interdisciplinary framework, but with a strong emphasis on the relevant findings from empirical psychology. A special focus will be set on conceptual cognition and its relationships – both developmental and functional – to linguistic abilities. So, among the topics to be discussed, there will be a balance between phenomena and models of development and mature functions.

Learning outcome, competences

knowledge:

- overview of the relationship between language and cognition within an interdisciplinary framework

attitude:

- is sensitive to and interested in noticing psychological phenomena and problems

skills:

- is able to interpret psychological phenomena and knows the historical rootedness of psychology as science;

Content of the course

Topics of the course

- In line with the interdisciplinary framework, the philosophical history of the issue will be briefly discussed, including the fundamental questions and approaches elaborated within the philosophical tradition,
- the main focus of the course will be set on psychological models:
    - the various modular
    - constructivist/neoconstructivist/social constructivist models of knowledge acquisition,
    - the modular, interactionist, and distributed models of mature language-cognition relationship.
- A considerable space will be given to the dissociative impairments of language-cognition relationship, their detailed analysis, and to most important features and outcomes of the computational (connectionist) simulations.

Learning activities, learning methods

Lectures and interactive discussions

Evaluation of outcomes

Learning requirements, mode of evaluation, criteria of evaluation:

requirements

- attendance

mode of evaluation: examination

criteria of evaluation:

- Understanding of the main concepts of the field;

- being able to describe the problems and open disputes
- Knoweldge on the explanatory models of development

Reading list

Compulsory reading list

- Carruthers, P. (2002). The cognitive functions of language. Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 25(6), 657-726.
- Guttenplan, S. (ed.). (1994). A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind. Oxford: Blackwell. (selected chapters)
- Hauser, M. D., Chomsky, N., & Fitch, W. T. (2002). The Faculty of Language: What Ist It, Who Has It, and How Did It Evolve? Science 298(22), 1569-1579.
- Mareschal, D., Johnson, M. H., Sirois, S., Spratling, M., Thomas, M., & Westermann, G. (2007). Neuroconstructivism, Vol. I: How the brain constructs cognition. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. (selected chapters)
- Müller, R. A. (1996). Innateness, autonomy, universality? Neurobiological approaches to language. Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 19 (4): 611-675.

Recommended reading list

- If any, it shall be specified in the course description for each semester.