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SwissUniversities Doctoral Programme
Language & Cognition
Module: Pragmatics Next

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WHAT
Pragmatics Next

While pragmatics is a relatively new field of scientific enquiry it has experienced in recent years an upsurge of activity in connection with the exponential development of cognitive science.

In its most recent guises, pragmatics is firmly grounded in cognition. And, unsurprisingly, it has benefitted directly from this heightened activity surrounding investigations of cognitive processes.

Through his work, Tim Wharton, has taken pragmatics to new territories and has applied the explanatory power of cognitive pragmatics to address new issues in human communication. From gestures, to non-verbal communication, to multimodality, his work pushes the limits of pragmatics. Tim is also the director of research in linguistics at the University of Brighton.

In this interactive workshop, participants will explore the next moves in pragmatic research benefitting from the insights of one of the scholars defining the next steps in the pragmatic agenda. The workshop will be kick-started by two presentations given by Tim Wharton and will then unfold in two brainstorming sessions whose goal will be to map out the next challenges in pragmatic research. Ample space will be devoted to the discussion of questions raised by the participants in connection with their own research.

WHO
Prof. Tim Wharton
(University of Brighton, UK)

WHEN
The module will take place on Monday 13 March 2017.

WHERE
This module is offered at the University of Fribourg and hosted by the PragLab research team.

Registration
15 doctoral students can take part in this module. The registration deadline is on 9 March 2017. The programme reimburses travel expenses as well as meals and a fixed accommodation rate of 90CHF/day for participants affiliated with a Swiss university.
This workshop can be used towards obtaining course credits.
In order to register, doctoral students should contact the coordinator at heidi.aro@unifr.ch.

Contact
All practical and administrative questions should be addressed to the programme coordinator, Mrs Heidi Aro, at heidi.aro@unifr.ch

More information (incl. schedule) can be found here: lettres.unifr.ch/fr/langues-litteratures/anglais/DocProg.html

Organisation
The SwissUniversities doctoral workshop *Language & Cognition* is organised by the University of Fribourg with the collaboration of the University of Geneva and the University of Neuchâtel.

Monday 13 March 2017, PER B205		
915h-9h30	D. Maillat	Welcome and introduction
9h30-10h30	T. Wharton	Pragmatics Next 1: *Doing what comes naturally*
10h30-11h	Coffee Break	
11h-12h00	All	round table, brainstorming and discussion
12h-13h30	Lunch	

Monday 13 March 2017, PER B205		
13h30-14h30	T. Wharton	Pragmatics Next 2 : *Slave to the passions: expressivity and emotions*
14h30-15h	Coffee Break	
15h-16h30	All	round table, brainstorming and discussion
18h30	Dinner	

Doing what comes naturally

In this talk I examine natural, non-verbal behaviours from a pragmatic (in particular relevance theoretic) perspective, and consider the role they play in intentional communication. The analysis is centred around two main themes, both of which have implications for how we construct pragmatic theories. Firstly, Paul Grice (1957) famously drew a line between 'showing' and 'non-natural meaning'. This has had substantial effects on the development of pragmatics: in general, pragmatists still focus on the notion of meaningNN and abstract away from cases of showing. In contrast to the many researchers who argue that the line should be drawn in a different place, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) argue the line should not be drawn at all. According to relevance theory, both showing and meaningNN are instances of overt intentional or ostensive-inferential communication, and rather than there being a cut-off between the two notions, there is a continuum of cases in between. Secondly, the wider question of how natural communicative behaviours are to be accommodated within a pragmatic theory breaks down into several further, more specific, questions—How are natural phenomena interpreted? Do they all work in the same way? I argue that some natural behaviours have a signalling function: they are, in effect, natural codes. Such behaviours do not fit easily into Grice's distinction between natural and non-natural meaning, which suggests that it is not exhaustive, and that it does not provide the best starting point for constructing theories of communication.

Slave to the passions: expressivity and emotions

This talk presents work in progress which attempt to synthesize an account of emotion and emotion-reading in a way that fits with, on the one hand, notions from cognitive models of pragmatics and, on the other, recent work on emotions in cognitive science. On the pragmatics side, the idea is that the kind of information encoded by linguistic expressives, interjections, facial expressions or tone of voice puts the user into a state in which emotional procedures are highly activated, and are therefore much more likely to be recognised and selected by an audience using the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure. Central to this thinking is the idea that the traditional relevance theoretic notion of cognitive effect needs to be complemented by a new notion of emotional effect, which are typically activated by emotion reading procedures and render them worth processing. Turning to cognitive science, the paper adopts Cosmides and Tooby's idea that an emotion is a kind of superordinate cognitive programme, the function of which is to regulate or mobilise cognitive sub-programs responsible for perception and attention, goal choice, information-gathering, specialised types of inference, physiological changes etc. Emotions clearly have a communicative function – though that they may not be their only function – so co-evolving with these programs or procedures would have been programs and procedures responsible for reading them in others.