
Language and the human mind: understanding the way we communicate

Language and the human mind: understanding the way we communicate

The project is concerned with the complex problem of language origin and language evolution, focusing on the permanent variability of grammatical structure. The research is based on close analysis of authentic language material: the everyday conversational usage as well as historical texts. Both perspectives provide invaluable insights concerning (i) the cognitive processes involved in the emergence and evolution of grammatical systems, (ii) the principles of verbal interaction in specific socio-pragmatic contexts, and (iii) the ways human mind processes information. The project combines cognitive linguistics, diachronic linguistics, experimental psycholinguistics, and conversational analysis. In addition to the project's theoretical relevance, some of the findings may reach into certain applied areas as well, e.g. the development of speech recognition tools for spontaneous speech.

Selected outputs

- Fried, Mirjam (2014). Irregular morphology in regular syntactic patterns: a case of constructional re-alignment. In J. Barðdal, S. Gildea, E. Smirnova & L. Sommerer (eds.), *Diachronic Construction Grammar*, pp. 141-174. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Zíková, Magdalena & Pavel Machač (2015): Parallel articulation: the phonetic base and the phonological potentiality. *Slovo a slovesnost*.
- Kim, Ronald (2014). A tale of two suffixes: *-h2-, *-ih2-, and the evolution of feminine gender in Indo-European. In Sergio Neri & Roland Schuhmann(eds.), *Studies on the Collective and Feminine in Indo-European from a Diachronic and Typological Perspective*, pp. 115-36. Leiden: Brill.