

**The International Summer School 2014:
Current Issues in Sign Language Linguistics (CISL)**

Abstracts^{*}

Summer School Lecture

25th - 27th August 2014

* All abstracts are published in the form in which they were sent in by the lecturers. No changes have been made.

9.30 - 12.25

Irena Vaňková: Stereotype as a Key to the Worldview of the Czech Deaf

Irena Vaňková is currently working at the Faculty of Arts at the Charles University in Prague, specifically at the Institute of Czech Language and Theory of Communication and the Institute of Deaf Studies. She is mainly focused on Cognitive Linguistics and Philosophy of Language.

Born in the Czech Republic, she studied at the Charles University in Prague. There she got her PhDr. in 1987 (Faculty of Arts), CSc. in 1994 (Faculty of Arts - Contemporary Czech Language), Ph.D. in 2005 (Faculty of Education - Philosophy) and she became an Associate Professor (doc.) in 2007 (Faculty of Arts - Czech Language).

She is a member of scientific counsel of the publication Česká knižnice, editorial counsel of the journal Czech literature and journal Word and Sense, collegium of Kruh přátel českého jazyka, the Ethnolinguistic Committee of the International Congress of Slavists and she is also a member of Slavic Cognitive Linguistic Association.

Research interests: Cognitively and Culturally Orientated Linguistics, Czech studies, Interpretation of Artistic Text, Metaphor and Metonymy in Czech Sign Language, Philosophy of Language and Communication

Abstract

The basis for our research is the European approach towards cognitive linguistics (represented by Jerzy Bartmiński and the Polish school of cognitive ethnolinguistics) reflecting especially the cultural aspects of a language. The principal concept of this approach is the linguistic worldview, i.e. a cognitive-culturally determined conceptualization of the world as affixed in language and texts. A component of this conceptualization of the world is the stereotype which has (as opposed to the prototype as described by E. Rosch) not only a cognitive, but also a sociocultural aspect (very often it also carries the aspect of self-determination relevant for the given cultural community). This theory and its associated methodology will be presented focusing on its possible applications in sign-language studies. First, we will demonstrate the methods of determining and verifying any stereotypical properties of a researched phenomenon in spoken languages (on the example of Czech); next we will discuss what indicators of stereotypes are available to researchers in the field of sign languages which differ profoundly from spoken languages (e.g. they do not have any written form which is, in terms of fixation, very important for spoken languages). Our research focuses on the following principal questions: How to research the worldview adopted by speakers of the (Czech) sign language; specifically how to research the stereotype as a part of this worldview? And of course: what is this worldview like and what

Monday 25th August 2014
Topic of the day: Cognitive Linguistics

foundations does it rest upon? (Most certainly, when realizing the worldview in sign languages, icono-metaphoric and more commonly icono-metonymic mapping is used.) However we are still looking for any answers to the questions above, or rather, we are starting to look. The lecture and the following workshop will discuss our preliminary experience, esp. concerning examples of ethnical (but also others) stereotypes in the Czech sign language.

13.30 - 14.45

Lucie Břínková: *National Stereotypes in Sign Languages*

The workshop shall be based on the knowledge gathered by European cognitive ethnolinguistics, in particular on J. Bartmiński's studies related to conceptualization of the world based on stereotypes. Signs designating nationalities in various sign languages shall be addressed. Pilot research pursued on the Czech Sign Language has demonstrated that stereotyped views of and attitudes to individual nations may already be expressed in the form of a sign (the shape of a hand, articulation position, motion); that expressive designations are created by modification of a single or several parameters of a sign etc. A joint attempt shall be made to apply these principles on material originating from other sign languages. At the end, workshop participants should find and formulate stereotypes of selected nationalities operating in the pictures of the world represented by their national sign languages. The presumption is that the comparative aspect will be also interesting (whether individual stereotypes in the studied sign languages match or differ and, if the latter is the case, what the difference consists in).

Marie Basovníková: *Stereotype of a Hearing Person in Sign Languages*

The workshop shall be based on the theory of stereotypes within J. Bartmiński's cognitive ethnolinguistics approach. To date, research has related to various social stereotypes (of occupation, nationality etc.); here it is the stereotype of a hearing person that shall be addressed – it shall be examined from the perspective of the Deaf cultural minority, i.e. the manner in which it is embedded in various sign languages. Within this perspective, both signs referring to a "hearing person", or a person being a part of the hearing community, and texts within certain genres of the Deaf folklore (esp. jokes and storytelling) on the topic of the hearing community, shall be targeted. The presumption is that various levels of the hearing person stereotype (appearance, communication, language, behaviour, qualities etc.) will be discovered. Given the fact that users of numerous sign languages shall take part, interesting comparative findings could be arrived at, too. (Does the hearing person stereotype differ in various sign languages and, if so, what does the difference consist in?)

Radka Zbořilová: *Conceptualization of Colours in Sign Languages*

The workshop shall be based on the cognitive linguistics principles, in particular on the linguistic picture of the world theory. Together the manner in which various sign languages reflect the "world of colours" shall be addressed, with the focus on perception and designation of colours, on signs associated with colours, on finding prototypes of certain

Monday 25th August 2014
Topic of the day: Cognitive Linguistics

colours etc. The manner in which the Czech Sign Language approaches the conceptualization of colours shall be demonstrated and, in mutual cooperation, comparing conceptualization of colours in other sign languages shall be attempted.

9.30 - 10.30

Christian Rathmann: *German Sign Language Corpus Project: The Corpus Design*

Christian Rathmann is Professor of Sign Languages and Sign Interpreting and Head of Institute for German Sign Language and Communication of the Deaf at the University of Hamburg.

He was born in Germany and after his initial studies in Hamburg, he earned his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin in 2005.

Since 2009 he is the project leader of the DGS-Corpus project which is a long-term project of the Academy of Sciences in Hamburg for the documentation of and research on German Sign Language (DGS). He is a member of the executive team and acts in management.

Since 2012 he is part of the project team of PRO-Signs which aims to establish European standards for signed language proficiency for professional purposes focusing specifically on sign language teaching in Deaf Studies and Sign Language Interpreting programs.

He is also the very first deaf professor in Germany.

Research interests: Agreement, Aspect, Corpus Sign Linguistics, Deaf Studies, Language Acquisition and Learning (L1 and L2), Linguistics of Sign Languages, Sign Interpreting, Text Structure

Abstract

First, after providing a brief introduction on two technical terms ("corpus" and "corpus design") and a short overview on current national sign language corpus projects, I will illustrate two main goals of our ongoing German Sign Language (DGS) Corpus Project: (a) DGS-Corpus and (b) Corpus-based DGS-German Electronic Dictionary.

Second, I am going to cover four areas which are pertaining to the sign language corpus design issues (with emphasis on our DGS Corpus project):

(1) Data collection procedure

- Data elicitation
- Selection of informants based on sociolinguistic criteria
- Informant's consent: Ethical issues
- Film studio setting

(2) Annotation

- iLex as an annotation tool
- Type-token matching
- Basic versus detailed transcription
- Feedback procedure
- Translational issues

(3) First corpus-based lexicographic analyses

- Color signs

(4) Ways of collaborating with Deaf communities

- Involvement of members of Deaf communities in our project at various stages
- Awareness of our project within Deaf communities

11.00 - 12.00

Trevor Johnston: *Adding Value to, and Extracting Value from, a Signed Language Corpus through Strategic Annotations*

Trevor Johnston is Professor of Sign Language Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

He was born in Australia and earned his Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of Sydney in 1989.

He is Chief on two current projects, first of which is concerned with Auslan/English interpreter-mediated communication in health and medical settings focusing on medical terminology in Auslan using Auslan Signbank (an internet-based dictionary). The second project then applies comparison of variation in Auslan and BSL for evidence of the hypothesis that grammar is emergent from language use, is driven by frequency and usage which is reflected in the processes of grammaticalization and language change.

He also conducted research in the area of Auslan assessment, especially as a first language, in the evaluation of sign bilingual education programs.

He coined the term “Auslan” and authored several dictionaries among which is also the very first Auslan dictionary that was completed in 1989 and then revised with Adam Schembri and named “Signs of Australia” in 1998.

Research interests: Bilingual Deaf Education, Corpus Linguistics (both for research into sociolinguistic variation and for empirical language description), Gesture Studies, Grammatical Description, Grammaticalization, Language Evolution, Lexicography

Abstract

This lecture I explain the way in which multimedia annotation software is being used to transform an archive of Auslan recordings into a true machine-readable linguistic corpus. After the basic structure of the annotation files in the Auslan corpus is described and the exercise differentiated from transcription, then the glossing and annotation conventions are explained. Following this the searching and pattern-matching at different levels of linguistic organization these annotations make possible is exemplified. I explain why it is important to be clear about the difference between transcription and annotation otherwise at the end of the exercise—despite time consuming and expensive processing of the video recordings—we may not actually be able to discern the types of patterns in our corpora that we had hoped we could. The conventions are designed to ensure that the annotations really do

Tuesday 26th August 2014
Topic of the day: Sign Language Corpora

enable researchers to identify regularities at different levels of linguistic organization in the corpus and thus to test, or build on, existing descriptions of the language.

13.00 - 14.00

Adam Schembri: *Quantitative Approaches To Analysing Sign Language Corpus Data*

Adam Schembri is an Australian Sign Language/English interpreter, a researcher and lecturer. Currently, he is also an Associate Professor in the Linguistics program in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Originally from Sydney, Australia, he earned his Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of Sydney in 2002.

During 2006-2010 he worked in UK at the Deafness Cognition and Language (DCAL) Research Centre, based at University College London, where he initiated and led on the BSL Corpus Project. In 2011, he moved back to Australia but remains involved in a number of DCAL-associated projects (particularly the BSL Corpus Project).

In 2007, he co-authored with Trevor Johnston the first comprehensive introduction to the linguistics of Auslan, the sign language of Australia - a book entitled 'Australian Sign Language (Auslan): An introduction to sign language linguistics'.

Research interests: Classifier Constructions, Corpus-based Approaches to Signed Language Research, Gesture and Sign Language Studies, Grammaticalization, Language Assessment, Lexical norming studies, Lexicography, Sociolinguistic Variation and Change, Typological Issues

Abstract

Work within variationist (socio-)linguistics often has implications for linguistic theory in general, as the quantitative approach to the study of corpora can be used to test any linguistic theory. The application of variationist quantitative approaches to the study of sign languages was pioneered by Ceil Lucas and her colleagues in the early 1990s on American Sign Language (ASL), and over the last decade, have grown to include work on sign languages in Australia, New Zealand, Italy and the United Kingdom. In this presentation, I describe some recent studies that have involved drawing on sign language corpora, with a focus on work on phonological, lexical and grammatical variation in BSL (British Sign Language) and Auslan (Australian Sign Language). Quantitative analysis has shown that the factors that drive sociolinguistic variation and change in both spoken and signed language communities appear to be broadly similar, but has also demonstrated that some factors involved in variation in sign languages are distinctive. In this talk, I will discuss how the data in such studies have been coded for quantitative analysis, and how the coding is analysed using Rbrul software, a multivariate statistical package designed specifically for (socio-)linguistic

Tuesday 26th August 2014
Topic of the day: Sign Language Corpora

studies of large language samples. I will then discuss how to interpret the statistical results, and what conclusions can be drawn about the nature of variation and change in these studies.

14.30 - 16.00

Trevor Johnston: *Building on Basic Annotations for Conducting Research: Exploring Examples and Solutions with Participants Using a Small Czech Sign Language Sample*

Trevor Johnston is Professor of Sign Language (SL) Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.

He was born in Australia and earned his Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of Sydney in 1989.

He is Chief on two current projects, first of which is concerned with Auslan/English interpreter-mediated communication in health and medical settings focusing on medical terminology in Auslan using Auslan Signbank (an internet-based dictionary). The second project then applies comparison of variation in Auslan and BSL for evidence of the hypothesis that grammar is emergent from language use, is driven by frequency and usage which is reflected in the processes of grammaticalization and language change.

He also conducted research in the area of Auslan assessment, especially as a first language, in the evaluation of sign bilingual education programs.

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Research interests: Bilingual Deaf Education, Corpus Linguistics (both for research into sociolinguistic variation and for empirical language description), Gesture Studies, Grammatical Description, Grammaticalization, Language Evolution, Lexicography

Abstract

In this workshop I will work with participants to explore how a small Czech SL example text, which has already been given a basic glossing (in Czech and English) can be "improved" by (a) streamlining the glosses according to ID glossing principles and the identification of sign types and (b) by the addition of annotations and tags on supplementary tiers in order to sort and search the data by various criteria. Participants will discuss possible research questions and decide on what annotations are required to address or answer these questions.

9.30 - 10.30

Ulrike Zeshan: *Many Languages at Hand - The Study of Sign Multilingualism*

Ulrike Zeshan is Professor of Sign Language Linguistics at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, Lancashire, England and Director of UCLan's International Institute for Sign Languages and Deaf Studies (iSLanDS).

She was born in Germany where she earned her Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Cologne.

In her research, she focuses for example on the documentation and analysis of sign languages in non-Western countries, including endangered sign languages, on large-scale comparative studies of grammatical structures across sign languages around the world and on Sign Multilingualism - the use of sign languages in multilingual settings.

Her applied research focuses on literacy teaching and peer education in developing countries, and she is involved in curriculum and materials development together with NGOs, academics, and governmental departments serving deaf communities in India and Turkey.

She is Director of the International Deaf Empowerment Foundation (iDEF), editor of the Sign Language Typology series and editor-in-chief of the Ishara Press, a social enterprise under the iDEF. She is also a member of the World Federation of the Deaf's expert group on Sign Language and Deaf Studies and is an ambassador for Deaf Parenting UK.

Research interests: Sign Language Typology, Sign Multilingualism, Sign Language Endangerment, Applied Sign Linguistics

Abstract

This presentation reports on a range of complex multilingual behaviours in sign language users in two interrelated studies, here called "cross-signing" and "sign-switching".

The "cross-signing" study investigates the ad-hoc improvised conversations of a small group of deaf sign language users from different countries and with no shared language, filmed when they met in pairs for the very first time. The participants from the UK, Jordan, Indonesia and Japan use a wide range of linguistic and communicative resources, including their own and invented signs, fingerspelling, pointing, mouthing, mime, and various representations of writing. Six dyadic conversations totalling 4 hours 41 minutes of video were recorded, and 50% of the material was annotated using the ELAN multimedia annotation programme, focusing on constructions with numeral signs. The data lead to a model based on Conversation Analysis (cf. Sidnell & Stivers 2012) that identifies typical

Wednesday 27th August 2014

Topic of the day:

Deaf Culture and Current Research in SLL

interaction patterns, whereby one signer introduces new linguistic material into the conversation (INTRODUCE), another signer adopts this choice (ACCOMMODATE) and then both partners continue using the same (PERSIST). Interviews following the video recordings reveal the communicative difficulties as well as strategies for overcoming miscommunication.

It can be argued these signers construct shared multilingual-multimodal spaces for the purpose of these conversations (Bradford, Sagara & Zeshan 2012). It can be argued that they construct shared multilingual-multimodal spaces for the purpose of these conversations (Bradford, Sagara & Zeshan 2012). This notion is also supported by experimental data. The same participant dyads engaged in a linguistic elicitation game which was repeated again after five weeks. Results show a marked increase in efficiency, where signers completed the task on average 30% more quickly the second time round, relying on shared strategies.

For the “sign-switching” study, four bilingual users of Burundi Sign Language (BuSL) and Indian Sign Language (ISL) participated in the collection of both conversational and experimental data, totalling over 6 hours of video data, and linguistic background questionnaires profiling each person’s bilingual language use (Panda & Zeshan 2012). In addition to free conversations, the participants engaged in a conversational game involving maps as prompts to elicit WH-questions, negatives, fingerspelling and numerals. A range of elicitation activities targeting the same structures was used with five participants who are bilingual in Turkish Sign Language and German Sign Language, and they were also filmed engaged in free conversations and provided linguistic background information (total amount of data 15 hours of video).

An analysis of WH-questions and negation in the BuSL-ISL bilingual data shows that some of the BuSL-ISL data show a strong tendency towards complex language mixing, facilitated by parallels in the linguistic structures and lexical similarity, i.e. the same or very similar signs being available in both languages although they are not genetically related. Therefore, for a sizeable part of the data it is difficult to argue for one language to be the (predominant) Matrix Language and the other one to be the (additional) Embedded Language as argued in Myers-Scotton (2002). The German Sign Language – Turkish Sign Language bilinguals show some interesting patterns where manual signs are in one sign language and co-occurring non-manual elements are in the other sign language.

The presentation presents an overview over these various strands of work. This research has extended known bi- and multilingual phenomena to the domain of sign languages (cf. Quinto-Pozos & Adam 2013), but also includes settings not found among spoken language users in the same way (i.e. the cross-signing situation). Importantly, both studies also focus attention on the meta-linguistic skills that signers use in these bi-/multilingual interactions, and thus the research showcases the impressive linguistic skills that signers regularly use in international interactions.

Wednesday 27th August 2014

Topic of the day:
Deaf Culture and Current Research in SLL

11.00 - 12.00

Carol Padden: *From Gesture to Sign Language*

Carol Padden is Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of California, San Diego. Since 2008 she also holds the position of Associate Dean and Faculty Equity Advisor in the Division of Social Sciences at the same university.

She was born in Washington, DC, and earned her Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of California in San Diego, in 1983.

Alongside her colleagues Mark Aronoff, Irit Meir and Wendy Sandler she is currently involved in research of a new sign language developing in cultural and social circumstances different from the ones typical for the Western World. For example, they are exploring ways in which the language forms are created in the natural environment, what properties emerge after one or two generations of language use or how the language spreads in a group of its users.

In 2010 she was a recipient of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation grant.

She is married to Tom Humphries and together they co-authored several books.

Research interests: American Sign Language, Language, Communication, Culture

Abstract

Our research group has been studying properties of gesture with speech, silent gesture (or pantomime) along with sign language to understand how the body is transformed when producing sign language. We will discuss several studies we have conducted of language emergence involving hearing non-signers, signers of a new sign language (3 or fewer generations from origin) and signers of an established sign language, including American Sign Language.

Wednesday 27th August 2014

Topic of the day:
Deaf Culture and Current Research in SLL

13.00 - 14.00

Klára Richterová: *Kinship Terminology in Signed Languages - Czech Sign Language*

Klára Richterová is a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University in Prague. At the Institute of Deaf Studies she teaches subjects such as Phonetics and Phonology of Sign Language or Written Czech of the Czech Deaf.

She was born in the Czech Republic and holds a Master's Degree from her studies at the Faculty of Arts – Czech Language and Literature. The topic of her diploma thesis was Tense in Written Texts of the Czech Deaf (2009) and in 2010 she graduated with the degree of PhDr. at the Faculty of Arts. Since 2010 she has continued with her studies which will eventually conclude with earning her Ph.D.

In addition to her work as a lecturer, she also cooperates with the Institute of the Czech National Corpus, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague on creating a corpus of the Czech written texts of the Czech deaf.

Research interest: Kinship Terminology in Czech Sign Language

Abstract

This lecture concerns one part of the lexicon of contemporary Czech Sign Language – namely kinship terminology, which was explored within the Sign Language Typology Project – Semantic Domains organised by prof. Ulrike Zeshan and Keiko Sagara, University of Central Lancashire. In addition to a brief description of the repertoire of terms for relatives, with a special emphasis on regional stratification (Bohemian signs vs. Moravian signs) and on their formal makeup, we will discuss origin of some of these terms and their (possible) motivations. Based on limited data we will provide a notion about diachronic changes of kin terms in Czech Sign Language, and the contemporary signs will be compared with and interpreted against the analogical data listed in the dictionary of Czech Sign Language of 1988.

Wednesday 27th August 2014

Topic of the day:
Deaf Culture and Current Research in SLL

14.30 - 16.00

Tom Humphries: *Meaning Making in Culture: 'deaf', 'HEARING' and Other Models*

Tom L. Humphries is an Associate Professor in the Education Studies Department and the Department of Communication at the University of California, San Diego.

He was born in the United States of America and he holds a Ph.D. in Cross Cultural Communication and Language Learning earned at the Union Graduate School in 1977.

In addition to teaching at UCSD, he has been developing an experimental curriculum for teaching deaf children by applying bilingual, multimodal teaching practices.

Research interests: Deaf Culture, Deaf Education, Bilingual Education, Changing Discourse in Time, Second Language Learning/Teaching, Teacher Talk in Schools

Abstract

Meaning making is typified by cultural and social processes that construct “worlds of meaning”, which when they interact, require careful negotiation and translation. Meaning is made within culture and across cultures. Part of this process involves the creation of ourselves and others. These constructions are models and these models become operationalized when we interact across cultures. Construction of models of “others” also is part of the process of defining ourselves (by defining what we are not).

Using the evidence of languages and words, how these constructions work can be understood as normal processes of meaning making within culture. Labels that we attach to such models (or don't attach) allow us insight into the meaning of self and other to people of different cultures and the implication for encounters between peoples.

This time will be used to explore further the ways that we create abstract models of ourselves and others and what that means for relationships and interactions between these models. Participants will be asked to identify and analyze historical evolution of these constructions and how change is negotiated in interactions between them.