

Olomoucká pobočka Jazykovědného sdružení České republiky

Vás zve na přednášku,

kterou prosloví

Prof. Dr. Peter Kosta

(Institut für Slavistik, Universität Potsdam)

Animacy, Gender and Agreement in Typologically and Genetically Cognate and Non-Cognate Languages - Cognitive Explorations into the Syntax-Semantic Interfaces of Human Language Faculty

Animacy, Gender and Agreement in Typologically and Genetically Cognate and Non-Cognate Languages - Explorations into the Syntax-Semantic Interfaces of Human Language Faculty

(přednáška bude proslovena česky)

Kdy: 5. 12. 2017 v 15.15 hod.

Kde: FF UP, místnost: **2.21**, tř. Svobody 26, 2. poschodí

Úvodní slovo: doc. PhDr. Božena Bednaříková, Dr. (FF UP)

Abstrakt:

The work on Animacy and Gender is motivated by its broad and very manifold variety of expressions in the 6500 languages of the world. In Slavic, for instance, there is a differentiated Grammaticalization of the category Gender and Animacy (as sub-Gender) expressed with different strategies of Case assignment, in other languages such as Ket the expression of animate objects is encoded by different verbal affixes. The grammatical categories of Gender and Animacy belong to the most pervasive and discussed problems if nominal categories in Slavic and elsewhere. In Slavic languages, every noun is characterized by two features of Gender, which pertain to two distinct semantic domains (the reason why it is also interesting from the viewpoint of cognitive approaches to semantics of natural languages). One of the features is known as Gender proper (which signifies a grammatical category known in most languages as Masculine, Feminine and in many also

as Genus Commune and/or Neuter), as opposed to the natural biological category natural Gender or “Sex” (which is not only a matter of linguistics but of life, thus the division between male and female). For sake of comprehension, I shall refer to the first category as (grammatical category of) **Gender**, differentiating between Masculine, Feminine and/or Neuter (or sometimes Genus commune), while in case of natural Sex I shall speak of **Natural Gender** or **Sex** and I shall use the terms male and female. The other category is known as the “Sub-Genus” Animacy or Adj. animate (cf. Stankiewicz 1986:129; Corbett 1980:43, Corbett 1991, Klenin 2009, Kosta 2003; Kosta in prep. 2017). **Gender** includes reference to **Sex** but only in cases when the noun refers to an **animate object**.

Unlike natural Gender/Sex, grammatical Gender *does not specify the natural sex of the referent*, but rather signals the absence or presence of a sexual property, or the absence or reference to sex as a cognitive reflex of the world how we imagine and classify it in different grammars of the 6500 languages of the world. And this encoding can be very different from the picture we have e.g. in Indo-European or more specific in, say, Czech, Polish, Lower or Upper Sorbian or Russian. Such sexual specification is obligatory for all nouns (substantives) regardless of whether they are animate or inanimate. The feminine Gender cannot designate male human beings, and the neuter Gender cannot specify sex since it is neuter in the etymological sense of the word, e.g. neither of both, masculine or feminine!

In some languages (e.g. in Russian, Czech and Polish), the neuter Gender tends to consist almost exclusively of substantives of the animate inanimate Sub-Gender. In contrast to feminine and neuter, masculine Gender can entail /designate both male and female human beings, and it includes both sexual and asexual entities. The three Genders in Slavic thus form two oppositions: in one of them the unmarked masculine Gender is opposed to the marked feminine and neuter Genders, whereas in the other the two marked Genders, the feminine and the neuter, are opposed to each other as positive vs negative members. Within the category of Animacy, the inanimate is opposed to the animate Gender as marked vs unmarked, since the inanimate Gender cannot designate animate beings, whereas the animate Gender encompasses both animate and inanimate entities. The range of encoding these two grammatical categories of the noun (in fact of the head of the NP = substantive noun, which percolates the features of Gender and Animacy via Agreement to the upper and lower categories of the DP/NP, thus to the attributive or predicative Adjectives, in some cases to the Number in NumP, cf. lower in the presentation, or to the inflected Quantifiers which behave as to Agreement like the Adjectives, they agree in Number, Gender and Case). Since Animacy is expressed with different Case assignment of the Governing Category on the Complement of the transitive Verb, it should be “Case” sensitive and trigger the Case Assignment of Genitive-Accusative to the complements of animate nouns, while it remains underspecified in inanimate nouns, and thus it assigns the default structural Case Accusative (as the default structural Case of direct object).

PhDr. Květoslava Musilová, Dr.,
tajemnice olomoucké pobočky JS ČR

doc. PhDr. Božena Bednaříková, Dr.,
předsedkyně olomoucké pobočky JS ČR