CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS

Finding Common Ground:
Social, Ecological, and Cognitive Perspectives on Language Use

A Conference sponsored by the Department of Psychology of the University of Connecticut, the Distributed Language Group, and the International Society for the Study of Interactivity, Language, and Cognition

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June 12-14, 2014
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Invited Speakers
Mark Bickhard, Department of Philosophy, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA
Rick Dale, Cognitive and Information Sciences, University of California, Merced, CA
Hanne De Jaegher, Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science, University of the Basque Country, Donostia-San Sebastián, Spain
Bryan Gick, Department of Linguistics, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
Susan Goldin-Meadow, Department of Psychology, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Alexander Kravchenko, Department of Foreign Languages, Baikal National University of Economics and Law, Irkutsk, Russia
Per Linell, Department of Culture and Communication, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden
Kerry Marsh, Department of Psychology, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Ruth Millikan, Department of Philosophy, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Joanna Račzaszek-Leonardi, Department of Psychology, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

For the past 50 years the most prominent theories of language have taken it to be individual, innate, internal (i.e., private), and designed for thinking. Variations in linguistic practices across culture and time are considered trivial; a universal set of formal operations is all that really counts as language (Berwick & Chomsky, 2011). Against this view, a wide variety of usage-based, functionalist, ecological accounts of language as a public, cultural, communicative activity have arisen, offering the view that language is part of a broader human adaptation for culture in which linguistic norms and patterns serve to solve coordination problems and to assist in collaborative efforts (Clark, 1996; Tomasello, 2008; Everett, 2012; Givón, 2013). Laks (2013) makes a strong case that usage-based approaches are now in ascendancy among researchers, but Ibbotson (2013) suggests that the variation of views among such researchers is a weakness, as well as a strength: Better integration and more in-depth development are needed. The conference we have organized is designed to meet this deep and pressing need. The time is especially appropriate since the past few years have seen fresh energy and enthusiasm for developing new ways of studying linguistic activity in social interactions that are genuinely dialogical and interactive.
There is an impressive array of scientists and scholars calling for language to be viewed as more interactive, more cultural, and more embodied. They include, but are not limited to, people from the following research traditions:

- Enactive approaches
- Dynamical systems theory
- Ecological approaches
- Gesture studies
- Interactive neuroscience
- Cognitive linguistics
- Dialogical cognitive psychology

We invite researchers to participate who are interested in how we can best understand *conversing as embodied, ecological engagement*. In coming together we will engage in conversation ourselves, with the hope that we can learn from each other. We certainly expect that the conference will help all of us develop our ability to understand the physical actions and social interactions entailed in conversing. We are also particularly interested in explorations of language addressing its social, embodied (e.g., gestural), pragmatic, and normative dimensions.

Talks will be approximately 25 minutes. Deadline for abstracts for papers (400 word limit) is February 15, 2014. For posters the deadline is March 10. Please send them to Carol Fowler or Bert Hodges at the email addresses below. We would appreciate receiving an email at any time to let us know that you are considering making a submission to the conference.

GRADUATE STUDENTS: There will be a limited number of $200 stipends available to help defray costs of attending the conference. There will also be a one-day pre-conference Workshop for graduate students to discuss theoretical and empirical issues that will prepare them to get more out of the conference. See separate announcement of Workshop on June 11.

Organizers: Carol Fowler (carol.fowler@uconn.edu) & Bert Hodges (bert.hodges@uconn.edu)

We are hoping to publish an edited volume based on papers presented at the conference, and a special issue of a journal addressed to language researchers and cognitive scientists. MIT Press has indicated preliminary interest.