The PI group “Grammar and Cognition”

presents
in the CLS Colloquium Series:

“Grammar, Cognition and the Exaptation of Argument Marking”

by Sander Lestrade

Our research group studies grammar in the broadest sense: as an interface between syntax and semantics, in its interaction with the world outside, with respect to the organization of its lexicon, in its development both in history and children, and for its relation with prescriptivist rules. After a short overview of our present research, I will discuss my recently started Veni project "The exaptation of argument marking".

A fundamental task for language is to provide the rules to map meaning to form. In the communication of an event, these rules should link semantic roles, such as agent and patient, to their grammatical functions, such as subject and object. Despite their importance for communication, grammatical strategies of argument marking (viz. word order, head marking, and dependent marking) are surprisingly limited, complex, and redundant. Why do languages not use a simple and straightforward means of encoding who did what to whom? In my project, I try to model the historic development of argument-marking systems.

Thursday, October 16th 2014, 16:00h (sharp)
Erasmus building 2.05

More information: http://www.ru.nl/cls/colloquium