

Categories and Prototypes

JP Prof. Dr. Eva Berlage

Commentary:

This course deals with categories and categorisation in English. To start off with, we will explore different conceptions of categories and look back in history at what people originally meant when they were talking about categories. We will then devote some time to discuss Eleanor Rosch's concept of prototypes and see how this idea has changed our definition of categories.

The remainder of the course will be concerned with what we call 'grammatical categories'. The study of grammatical categories involves questions such as the following:

- What makes an adjective an adjective and a noun a noun?
- Can words shift from one word class to another?
- Are some members of a grammatical category more prototypical than others?

These questions will be answered both from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective.

Although we will mainly be concerned with category boundaries in English, we will also include typological studies on other languages.

Selected Literature

Aarts, Bas, David Denison, Evelien Keizer and Gergana Popova (eds.) (2004). *Fuzzy Grammar. A Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

A comprehensive list of references will be provided at the first meeting.

Requirements:

regular attendance via Zoom (Tuesday, 4:00-5:45 pm). Note: the online sessions start at 4:00pm (sharp). The course finishes on 02 February 2020.

Please note: the link for joining the Zoom session will be sent to the e-mail address with which you register in Stine.

presentation (via Zoom)

term paper

First session:

3 November 2020