Abstract:

Language and thought are closely intertwined in human mind. They have often been conceived as distinctive features of human cognition, which makes it pivotal to delineate and investigate the concrete links between these two capabilities. Traditionally, the relation of language and thought has been investigated by comparing different languages, but modern society opens also other possibilities to investigate the role of language relative to various forms of group thinking, problem solving and innovation. Industrial design has become a central part of modern economy and industry. In this activity, designers use several expertise-specific sublanguages to communicate and to develop their thoughts and initial concepts. Such activity evidently provides numerous possibilities to empirically investigate the links of thought and language as cognitive processes. The investigation itself needs to be multidisciplinary and it requires collaboration between cognitive linguistics and multidisciplinary research of human thinking in cognitive science.

The present theme session opens discussion about the foundations of research on the relations of design thinking and design discourses. The major problems we shall discuss concern the theoretical and methodological foundations of investigating design language and design thinking from various linguistic or cognitive-scientific perspectives. This mapping of problems is vital for laying ground for future multidisciplinary research. The questions discussed in the theme session links the domain of linguistics to those of philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience.

To gain its status as a research field studying the relationship between language and mind or cognition, cognitive linguistics needs not only linguistic but interdisciplinary approach as well. This theme session combines orientations of cognitive linguistics, cognitive science, cognitive psychology and neuropsychology to analyze the relationship between language and thought in design processes.