

**Communication, cognition and convention:  
How does language emerge from the interaction of usage, minds and communities?**

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It seems that three essential conditions have to be met for language to work the way it does: speakers have to use a given language for communication; each individual speaker must have a mental representation of the language; and the members of a given speech community must share and adhere to the linguistic conventions that constitute the language. In usage-based and complex-adaptive models of language (see, e.g., Berg 2009, Bybee 2010, Kretzschmar 2015, The Five Graces Group 2009, Tomasello 2003) it is assumed that individual knowledge and collective conventions emerge from communication and are sustained by it.

In my talk I will present the outlines of a usage-based complex-adaptive model, the Entrenchment-and-Conventionalization Model (Schmid 2020), which is designed to explain how exactly communication, cognition and convention interact and how this interaction brings about and sustains linguistic structure and persistence as well as linguistic change and variation. Exemplary corpus studies will be used to show how the predictions of the model can be tested.

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- The Five Graces Group, [Beckner et al.] (2009). 'Language Is a Complex Adaptive System: Position Paper', *Language Learning* 59: 1-26.
- Tomasello, Michael (2003). *Constructing a Language: A Usage-Based Theory of Language Acquisition*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.