Vortrag im Rahmen des Linguistischen Kolloquiums

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Interaction between ideophones and gesture in Awetí (Tupian)

The aim of this presentation is to show how gesture can meaningfully interact with ideophones in Awetí discourse. This interaction has not yet been studied to a great extent across languages (e.g. Kita 1997, Dingemanse 2010). I will discuss several typical examples from a documentation corpus of almost 20 hours of transcribed and translated audio and video recordings of oral narratives and task descriptions from this Amazonian language which is spoken by around 160 individuals in the multiethnic environment of the Xingu National Reserve in Central Brazil.

Awetí ideophones show many of the characteristics found in ideophones across languages. They are prosodically marked, have special phonotactic constraints and an 'expressive' morphology. They can be structurally integrated to varying degrees and semantically depict sensory events. Most of them are conventionalized. In addition, Awetí ideophones may develop into verb roots – a process which can be observed in all its stages on the synchronic level – and there is evidence that they can be borrowed from and into neighboring languages.

Gestures may interact with ideophones in various ways: Iconic gestures narrow down the activities which are depicted by ideophones with a more general meaning. They may visually reflect phonosemantic characteristics of ideophones or vary in accordance with the discourse prominence or the degree of syntactic integration of the ideophones they synchronize with. In the context of motion events pointing gestures are used which usually depict the 'path' component, also primarily encoded in Awetí motion verbs (cf. Talmy 1985, 2007). When uttered synchronously with ideophones which provide information on the 'manner' of movement, pointing gestures also reflect this component to differing degree.

The interaction to be demonstrated in the presentation is another illustration of the multi-modality of communication, i.e. that meaning is not just expressed linguistically, by lexicon and grammar, but that auditory and visual modes of representation can provide important information in oral discourse.

References

Dingemanse, Mark (2010). Folk definitions of ideophones. In Norcliffe, Elisabeth and N.J. Enfield (eds.) *Field Manual* Volume 13, 24-29. Nijmegen: Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics.

Kita, Sotaro (1997). Two-dimensional semantic analysis of Japanese mimetics. *Linguistics* 35(2), 379-415.

Talmy, Leonard (1985, 2007). "Lexicalization patterns: semantic structure in lexical forms". In: Shopen, Timothy (ed.). *Language Typology and Syntactic Description.* Vol. 3. Cambridge: CUP, 57-149.

Ort: Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften, Invalidenstr. 118, Raum 217
Zeit: 16:15 Uhr

Alle Interessierten sind herzlich eingeladen!