PHILOSOPHY MEETS COGNITIVE SCIENCE

RUB

Stiftung Mercator

Mercator Research Group

Organization and contact: Prof. Dr. Markus Werning.
Website: www.rub.de/phil-lang.
Venue: Thursday, 14 April 2011, 16-18, in room GA 04/187.
All interested students, scientists, and scholars are cordially
invited to the following talk of the research colloquium:

Maria Spychalska

(University of Warsaw)

Reasoning in natural language

In my talk I briefly present my experimental results concerning reasoning with quantifiers "some" and "most" in natural language. I focused on scalar implicatures of "most" and "some", and on syllogistic with "most". I present main results as well as discuss some open questions and propose research directions in the field of reasoning with quantifiers.

Furthermore, I discuss reasoning with predicate negation. I compare cases of reasoning with predicates for which there exist opposites in language, that is counterpart predicates expressing contrary properties ("long" vs "short", "closed" vs "open") with cases of reasoning with predicates that lack opposites ("red", "triangle"). I predict that comprehension of sentences with predicate negation, such as "This door is not P", may depend on existence in the language of a predicate opposite to P. Namely, representing a negative of P (i.e. "not P"), in the case when P does not have an opposite, may be impaired and hence logical reasoning may be affected in specific cases. I propose experiments to investigate this hypothesis.