The LEAD Graduate School & Research Network at the University of Tübingen invites you to attend the lecture by

Dr. Patrick Rebuschat
Lancaster University

Implicit-statistical learning of words and syntax: Evidence from cross-situational learning

Wednesday, April 26th, 2017, 12.15-13.45 hrs
Wilhelmstr. 19, 72074 Tübingen, Seminar room 1.13

Abstract: In this talk, Dr. Patrick Rebuschat will present recent experiments that bring together methodological insights from two related, yet completely distinct research strands, namely “implicit learning” (Reber, 1967) and “statistical learning” (e.g., Saffran et al, 1996). In the first part, he will discuss experiments that used verbal reports and subjective measures of awareness to determine what strategies subjects followed in the learning task and whether they became aware of rules or patterns. Results indicate that provision of prior (explicit) knowledge significantly boosts implicit-statistical learning. In the second part, he will introduce a novel artificial language paradigm that is part of a long-term project on individual differences in language learning across the lifespan. The results demonstrate that adult learners can simultaneously acquire lexical and syntactic information by keeping track of cross-trial statistics, after brief exposure, without feedback and without the conscious intention to learn. The talk will conclude by discussing implications for future research.

Biography: Dr. Patrick Rebuschat received his PhD from the University of Cambridge and his BA from the University of Lisbon. Prior to joining Lancaster, he taught at Georgetown University, Harvard University, the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the University of Goettingen. He also enjoyed spending a semester as a Visiting Researcher at the University of Auckland.

He is interested in the cognitive and neural basis of language, i.e. he studies how the mind/brain acquires and processes language(s). He is particularly interested in implicit learning, statistical learning, and bilingual cognition. He and his group run psycholinguistic experiments to address questions such as the following:

- What makes some of us particularly good at learning languages?
- Does age make a difference in language learning?
- How do we measure implicit (unconscious) and explicit (conscious) knowledge?
- What is the nature of the learning mechanism that underpins language acquisition?
- What are the cognitive advantages of speaking more than one language?
- Is there any point in teaching explicit grammar rules or is this just a waste of time?

Important Publications:

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