

LECTURE SERIES

**Tuesday,
1st June
2021**

12:15 - 13:15

Online via zoom

Talking About Temperature and Social Thermoregulation in the Languages of the World

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The last decade saw rapid growth of the body of work devoted to relations between social thermoregulation and various other domains, with a particular focus on the connection between prosociality and physical warmth. This talk will report on a first systematic cross-lingual study of the exponents of the conceptual metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Grady, 1997), which provides the motivation for the large share of research in this area. Assumed to be universal, it enables researchers, mostly speakers of major European languages, to treat words like warm and cold as self-evident and easily translatable between languages – both in their concrete uses (to feel warm/cold) and as applied to interpersonal relationships (a cold/warm person, warm feelings etc.). Based on a sample of 94 languages from all around the world and using methodology borrowed from typological linguistics and mixed-effects regression modelling, we show that the relevant expressions show a remarkably skewed distribution and seem to be absent or extremely marginal in the majority of language families and linguistic macro-areas. The study demonstrates once again the dramatic influence of the Anglocentric, Standard Average European, and WEIRD perspective on many of the central concepts and conclusions in linguistics, psychology and cognitive research and discusses how changing this perspective can impact research in social psychology in general and in social thermoregulation in particular.

Zoom:

<https://unige.zoom.us/j/94594735063?pwd=NVZLRmU5VHVlRWNoZlJlbnhacXNEQTog>

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