Passionate Morphosyntax

Norbert Corver (Utrecht university)

This talk addresses the question of how affective information is linguistically packaged in the build of language, specifically (varieties of) Dutch. I propose that the linguistic encoding of unexpectedness provides a point at which the language system and the affect system interact with each other at the interface. Specifically, affective color can be induced linguistically by deviations from a regular linguistic form or pattern. The linguistic deviation indexes unexpectedness of information. Unexpectedness regards the place of a symbol in a larger linguistic pattern or the formal manifestation (augmentation and duplication) of the symbol itself (symbol-based indexation of unexpectedness). The phenomenon of linguistic deviation will be exemplified on the basis of the behavior of a variety of linguistic elements, including articles, pronouns, subordinators, verbal forms, diminutive morphology, and interjections.