



Cukier-Goldstein-Goren Center for Mind, Cognition and Language,
School of Philosophy, Linguistics and Science Studies,
Department of Linguistics

THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

Thursday 11/05/2023

16:15-17:45

Gillian Ramchand, University of Tromsø

Events in Time: On the Difference Between Endpoint and Telos

It can be shown purely temporal definitions of verbal telos require possible worlds for their implementation, even in the simplest cases. I argue that this is not the right move, since it obscures the distinction between essentialist conceptual content as embodied in lexical items on the one hand, and actual hypothetical meaning representations such as those found in modals and counterfactual statements on the other. Instead, these intensional paradoxes should lead us to make a systematic distinction between the conceptual event-topological notion of telos (a description of the teleological end essential to a particular event label) and the actualization (or not) of that telos in instantiated events corresponding to that label. Under this view, the lowest domain of the verbal extended projection is atemporal and conceptual, and extensional meanings only arise once tense information is present.

Further, I will present the results of an eye tracking experiment comparing Russian and English which I argue shows that entailment to culmination is not enough to explain the facts. Rather, we need to include the essential content of a telos in the representation of the Russian perfective morphology, but not in the case of the English past tense. We also need to distinguish between what is directly asserted and what is merely entailed.

Click [here](#) to see the colloquium program.

