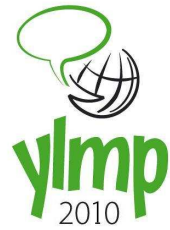

***When language affects cognition and when it does not:
A comparison of three perceptual domains (colour,
number, motion)***

Panos Athanasopoulos (Bangor University, Bangor, United Kingdom)



The extent to which the language we speak affects the way we think has been a matter of considerable debate in the fields of Linguistics, Psychology, Anthropology and Philosophy for more than a century. Here, I will review recent findings from linguistic and cognitive processing of three different domains, namely colour, object quantification, and motion event construal, in both monolingual and bilingual populations. A comparative analysis of findings across domains shows that the degree to which language may shape cognition appears to be domain-specific. Strong language effects are observed in colour perception and categorisation, task-dependent effects are observed in the domain of object quantification, and memory-based but not online processing effects are observed in the domain of motion event construal. The evidence also shows that learning another language with contrasting categories from the first may lead to cognitive restructuring in the mind of the individual, depending on the degree of language proficiency, length of cultural immersion, and frequency of language use. I will conclude by highlighting the dynamic and flexible nature of human cognition, as revealed by both behavioural and neurophysiological measures of performance.