

## What makes us human? / Was macht den Mensch zum Menschen? November 12 – 13, 2007

Forschungsgruppe:

Was ist der Mensch? Kultur – Sprache – Natur

The interdisciplinary research group “Was ist der Mensch? Kultur – Sprache – Natur” and the associated graduates’ program are a joint project of the University of Dortmund and the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen, Forschungskolleg der Universitäten Bochum, Dortmund, Duisburg-Essen). Through its annual conference the research group seeks to provide a platform for re-thinking basic aspects of humans’ nature and to encourage work on a new, integrated conception of what it means to be human.

### The Conference

This year’s symposium will present research on human development, language acquisition and social interaction and will explore its import for an understanding of humans’ nature. While it is generally agreed that the social and cultural dimensions of human interaction are distinctive, the exact character of human interaction, its basic processes and component abilities are the subject of debate.

- Which abilities make human social interaction distinctive?
- Do humans possess a species-unique adaptation for social interaction?
- What role does the human capacity for language play?
- What do studies of acquisition reveal about human abilities?
- Which factors influence human interaction over the life span?

The symposium aims to examine current research on these questions and to discuss its implications for the question of what makes us uniquely human.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2007

1.00 p.m.

Welcome

Michael Tomasello  
(Max Planck Institute-EVA, Leipzig)  
The Origins of Shared Intentionality

Session I: Linguistic Structures in Socio-Cultural Context

Nick Enfield  
(Max Planck Institute-Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen)  
Social Consequences of Referential Practice

Ludger Hoffmann  
(Dortmund)  
Kommunikative Welten. Vom Potenzial menschlicher Sprache

Louise Röska-Hardy  
(Dortmund / Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen)  
Is Linguistic Interaction the Key?

4.50 p.m. coffee break and poster session

6.15 p.m.

*Public Lecture*

Volker Heeschen  
(LMU, München)  
Sprechen – Instinkt, Ritual und Kunst

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2007

9.00 a.m.

Session II: Language Acquisition in Socio-Cultural Context

Heike Behrens  
(Basle)  
Children’s Sensitivity to the Input Language

Uta Quasthoff  
(Dortmund)  
The Interactive *Discourse Acquisition Support System*

10.45 a.m. coffee break

Kerstin Leimbrink, Sören Ohlhus, Petra Strähle  
(Dortmund)  
Sequences – Discourse – Text. Supportive Structures in the Acquisition of Communicative Abilities

2.00 p.m.

Session III: Interaction in Socio-Cultural Context

Manfred Holodyski  
(Münster)  
Denken und Sprechen - Fühlen und Ausdrücken. Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede in der Sprach- und Emotionsentwicklung

Harald Welzer  
(Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen)  
Warum Menschen ein autobiographisches Gedächtnis haben (und Tiere nicht)

15.40 p.m. coffee break

Michael Kastner and Selda Akca  
(Dortmund)  
Selbstmanagement als spezifisch menschliche Transaktion zwischen Person, Situation und Organisationskultur

Conception:  
Dr. Louise Röska-Hardy  
Interdisziplinäre Forschungsgruppe  
„Was ist der Mensch? Kultur – Sprache – Natur“  
Tel.: ++49 / 231 / 755-71 33  
e-mail: [louise.roeska-hardy@kwi-nrw.de](mailto:louise.roeska-hardy@kwi-nrw.de)

#### Institutionen

Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut  
Goethestraße 31  
45128 Essen  
Tel.: ++49 / 201 / 72 04 - 0  
Fax: ++49 / 201 / 72 04 - 111  
<http://www.kwi-nrw.de>

Universität Dortmund  
44227 Dortmund  
Tel.: ++49 / 231 / 755-29 21  
Fax.: ++49 / 231 / 755-44 98

**KWI** Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen  
Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities  
Forschungskolleg der Universitäten Bochum, Dortmund, Duisburg-Essen



**UNIVERSITÄT DORTMUND**

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**An International Symposium**

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**Programm**