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A setting for research on cognition and language learning: The Umeå SKOLUM project

This presentation is about a five-year project which has just started at Umeå University. We are four cognitive linguists from the Department of Language Studies who have received money from the Umeå School of Education to develop an environment for research on language and cognition. Our background is in research on lexical semantics, conceptual metaphor and metonymy, as well as the teaching and learning of English prepositions (e.g., Steinvall 2002, Tissari 2010, Boström 2018, Okonski & Johansson Falck 2025). The aim of the project is to strengthen language teaching and learning through cognitive linguistic research, as well as to strengthen the department's national and international collaboration in the field. A further aim is to make the Umeå School of Education more attractive to prospective teacher students in languages. The plan is to chart research on relevant topics in cognitive linguistics, such as metaphor and language learning, and involve both our students and local teachers in joint work in investigating possibilities of using such research as a basis for language teaching in the classroom. At the moment, we are especially interested in the teaching of English, but also other languages such as Swedish are potentially of interest. We have started our project by organizing a reading circle where we have read about cognitive linguistics and language learning. This presentation is one small step in making the project more international but note that the project members also participate in organizing this year's SALC conference in June, with the theme of "Language, cognition and learning" (SALC = the Scandinavian Association of Language and Cognition). A further step that we are planning right now is to supervise degree projects in language teaching and learning for subject teachers, beginning next term.

References

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