

LOEWE Research Cluster LingBas

Exploring Fundamental Linguistic Categories



One brain – thousands of languages. How does that work?

Language is a central cognitive human ability and humankind's most important communication organ. Although people's brains are all very similar, there were, and still are, thousands of different languages, which are also constantly evolving. What are the common elements in this diversity? What fundamental categories – such as syllables or words – can be shown to exist everywhere and at all times? By studying the evolution of language over lengthy periods and analysing the structure and dynamics of German regional languages, the researchers in the LOEWE research cluster are seeking to identify and provide empirical evidence of fundamental linguistic categories. Taking these "universals" as their starting point, they are researching the relationship between language and the brain with a view to improving the diagnosis and therapy of language disorders.



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SUBJECT AREAS

Theoretical linguistics
Variational linguistics
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Clinical linguistics
Historical linguistics
Neurolinguistics

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LOEWE and ProLOEWE

Since 2008 the German federal state of Hessen has been promoting outstanding research initiatives through its own excellence programme, LOEWE. To date, 11 LOEWE research centres and 35 LOEWE research clusters have been selected in a competitive process to receive funding.

ProLOEWE is the LOEWE research initiatives network: their common aim is to provide information about their activities, speed up access to their research and intensify their cooperation. The website www.proloewe.de/en provides an overview of the LOEWE research initiatives.