

**Metaphorical patterns and cultural practice:
Converging and diverging evidence about the conceptualization of personality**

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How do speakers of German conceptualize the “self”? In German, we find lots of metaphorical and idiomatic expressions using the word *Herz* ‘heart’, to refer to personal features, especially feelings and personality. On the other hand, in modern Western science the brain is considered to be the place where our personality – including perception, thought and memory, consciousness, and emotions – is located.

In my talk, I will present corpus-linguistic data and observations from culture which give insights into the conceptualization of “self” and “personality”. Based on corpus linguistic methods for metaphor analysis proposed by Deignan (1999, 2005) and Stefanowitsch (2004, 2005, 2006), I conducted a corpus study using the PUBLIC corpus of the IDS Mannheim (the largest available corpus of German). I analyzed metaphorical utterances from this corpus containing the words *Herz* ‘heart’ and *Gehirn* ‘brain’ and identified the underlying conceptual metaphors. I then compared the results of the analysis of metaphorical patterns in language with more general historical and cultural evidence for the conceptualization of the self as located in these body organs.

My corpus analysis shows that the metaphorical patterns found in the data suggest that feelings and personality are conceptualized as being in the heart. This is pretty much in line with religious ideas about personality, but runs counter medical practice and jurisdiction, where “personality” is conceptually located in the brain of a person. Therefore, I will argue that linguistic data can give important insights into folk models and conceptualizations, but for a more complete picture of cultural models evidence from history and culture must be taken into account.

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