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Introduction

About Cognitive Science and Knowledge Studies/Technologies

Cognitive science is a rapidly evolving highly interdisciplinary field dealing in the first place with mind and cognition, and in a broader perspective, with all aspects of human and non-human (be it animal or artificial) life influenced in one way or another by "what we know" and "how we know". As *Cognitive Science* comprises various disciplines, like Neuroscience, Psychology, Artificial Intelligence, Philosophy, Linguistics, Biology, etc. (to name but the core disciplines), it often uses a comparative view on cognitive phenomena, which proves to be fruitful. Despite of its young age (the very idea of this new discipline was born in the 50-ies, and the process of its institutionalization started at the end of the 70-ies), cognitive science now could be regarded as a paradigm-forming field among the broad area of all human sciences, with a great impact on many spheres of human life.

Closely related to the field of cognitive science is the newly emerging discipline of *knowledge studies* and *knowledge technologies*. The emerging field of Knowledge Studies/Technologies is a highly inter-/transdisciplinary domain having a broad background in philosophy, epistemology, and philosophy of science. Apart from these disciplines a wide range of scientific fields is involved: cognitive science, pedagogy, knowledge technologies, knowledge management, cultural sciences, knowledge sociology, etc. Knowledge Studies is about the processes of generating, constructing, negotiating, understanding, and sharing knowledge using several different technologies and media, as well as taking into consideration the social dimension of these processes. Understanding the interactions between cognitive systems (their cognitive/knowledge processes), their environment, and the artifacts (technological, cultural, etc) and how they shape each other (under the perspective of knowledge processes) is the focus of research and teaching in this CEEPUS network.

It is obvious that there are close relations between the fields of cognitive science and knowledge studies/technologies: apart from their highly interdisciplinary character their focus is on cognitive processes and their "products"; i.e., knowledge (processes) are the result of cognitive processes and cognitive processes are characterized by knowledge processes. Hence, one discipline cannot be understood without the other: while there is a wide range of applied results, cognitive science research activities can predominantly be characterized as basic research. Knowledge studies and technologies also introduces the dimension of application in various domains of business, education, and many other fields.

Teaching Programs in Cognitive Science and Knowledge Studies/Technologies

For more than twenty years cognitive science has not only been a field of research but also a major subject of various graduate and Ph.D. programs educating a new generation of young researchers and professionals. The major part of these programs are in the USA and Canada (to mention only the University of California at San Diego, Carnegie-Mellon University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, the University of Toronto, McGill University etc.) but there are also some very important European centers for research and education in cognitive science: University of Edinburgh, University of Sussex, University of Hamburg, University of Vienna, University of Osnabrück, etc. It is seen that they are predominantly in the Western part of Europe. In Central and Eastern Europe, the process of institutionalizing cognitive science started in the 90-ties, with the New Bulgarian University being the first to offer a program in cognitive science, followed by the Lorand Eotvos University (Budapest).

Very recently, in October 2005, a project for the development of a **joint master program** in cognitive science ("Middle European international/interdisciplinary master programme in Cognitive Science") has been started by 6 Central and Eastern European universities (University of Vienna, University of Ljubljana, Comenius University Bratislava, University of Zagreb, Eotvos Lorand University Budapest and Technical University Budapest).

Furthermore, several PhD-programs in cognitive science are in place at most participating institutions.

Similarly knowledge studies/technologies have been established only recently as regular study programs in various US and European countries. Formerly, they were often implicitly located in philosophy (of science) or computer science departments. The University of Vienna is about to launch a master program in that field.

The Present Status of Cognitive Science and Knowledge Studies/Technologies in Central and Eastern Europe

The first (for Central and Eastern Europe) graduate program in cognitive science was founded by the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology of New Bulgarian University. It started in October, 1992. More details concerning this program are given below, where a brief presentation of the departments involved in the proposed network is given. At this point it should only be stressed that from the very beginning of its existence, the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology was open for international cooperation: it established close relations with leading cognitive science centers around the world. Since 1994 the Department began to organize an International Summer School in Cognitive Science every year, and since 1995 an International Graduate Program in Cognitive Science held in English was set up. This program attracted students from Armenia, Belarus, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, and Ukraine. The program is also open for ERASMUS students, the last two years it was attended by more than 10 students from the University of Osnabrück.

A few years later, a Ph.D. program in Cognitive Science was established by the Department of History and

Philosophy of Science of Lorand Eotvos University (Budapest). This Department is one of the founding partners of our network. They started a one-semester certificate-giving program in English for undergraduate students. The name of the program is "Budapest Semester in Cognitive Science" (BSCS). Students from USA, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Hungary, and Germany took part in BSCS during the last years.

In March 2003 the University of Zagreb established an interdisciplinary graduate program (master and doctoral) in "Language Communication and Cognitive Neuroscience".

Today there are also several groups at different Central and Eastern European universities, such as in Croatia, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Russia, which have been founded in order to propagate the ideas of cognitive science and knowledge studies, and to promote the establishment of educational programs in this field.

Out of that the idea for a joint program emerged and got concrete in the curriculum development project "Mei:CogSci:Middle European international/interdisciplinary master programme in Cognitive Science" funded by SOCRATES/ERASMUS.

Further information

* As we are currently developing the "Mei:CogSci:Middle European international/interdisciplinary master programme in Cognitive Science", we can't provide a full list of modules in the Joint Degree Section at this moment. The ones listed are introductory modules and modules of the integrative kernel, which is the key feature of this joint curriculum. Each partner university will provide these modules, representatively for all the University of Vienna is named as offering institution.

*As we are designing the Mei:CogSci in accordance with the Bologna declaration, the curriculum details given in the provided section refer to the level of modules, not of lectures, seminars, etc. I.e., modules are defined by learning outcomes, which have to be met. But each university is free to select lectures, seminars, courses, etc. as long as the learning outcomes are met.

*Moreover, we are defining the curriculum on the basis of ECTS; that is the reason, why we didn't indicate hours.

*A more detailed description of the curriculum can be found in the uploaded documents (Joint Degree Information - CognitiveScience_Curriculum.pdf). Here you can find the architecture of the curriculum as well.

*We also provided a list with proposed advanced and specialised modules, which is preliminary and subject to change (Joint Degree Information - ModuleList_preliminary.pdf)

* Students mobility: As MEi:CogSci is joint degree program, student will have to acquire 30 ECTS at foreign universities. We would like to offer students the possibility to acquire these 30 ECTS in parts over the whole two years of study, if they have difficulty with leaving for a whole semester. CEEPUS short term student funding could provide a solution for that problem. That is the reason, why the amount of short term students is quite high in our application.

Planned activities

- exchange of students for the joint master program in cognitive science;
- exchange of teachers for the joint master program in cognitive science;
- student exchange for graduate students ("CogWorld" PhD program et al.);
- Participation in the Summer School in Cognitive Science organized by New Bulgarian University, Sofia;
- Joint one-term undergraduate education in cognitive science in the framework of Budapest Semester in Cognitive Science.

Types of instructions planned

lectures
assistance with work on a (doctoral) thesis
laboratory work
summerschool
internship
courses
language course

Language of instructions planned

english
german
others (pls. specify in section 'network activities')