# BCGL10
# Call for Papers
## The Morphology and Semantics
## of Person and Number

CRISSP - www.crissp.be

> The Center for Research in Syntax, Semantics and Phonology (CRISSP) of KU Leuven is proud to present the tenth instalment of the Brussels Conference on Generative Linguistics on December 4 and 5, 2017. The theme of this year's conference is the morphology and semantics of person and number.

Person (in pronominal elements such as independent pronouns, pronominal clitics and affixes and agreement markers) is often believed to be a universal morphosynctactic category in language, which shows great variation in its morphology (Forchheimer 1953; Siewierska 2004; Cysouw 2003). This can be seen in for example the different syncretism patterns that exist between the individual persons and across the numbers. Many accounts of person and number paradigms aim to explain these syncretism patterns by giving a feature-based analysis, such as a.o. Harley & Ritter (2002); Baerman et al. (2005); Bobaljik (2008); Harbour (2016); Ackema & Neeleman (2017).

Person and number also show variation in the morphological composition of the individual pronominal elements, in some cases resulting in a markedness hierarchy (Zwicky 1977; Corbett 2000; Moskal 2014; Smith et al. 2016). Consider for example the fact that the morphological form for the inclusive can properly contain that of the exclusive and also vice versa. In this case, there appears to be no morphological markedness relation. However, for number, the plural can contain the morpheme for singular but not vice versa (e.g. Daniel 2005; Nichols & Peterson 2013; Harbour 2016).

Semantic distinctions also play a role in markedness relations. For example, third person is a non-participant and therefore different from first and second (e.g. Silverstein 1976). For number, semantic markedness has been argued to be the opposite of morphological markedness, with singular as the more marked category (Sauerland 2008).

**Questions**

Questions related to the morphology of person and number in pronominals include the following:

- Which syncretisms are possible in language and which are not? Also, why do free pronouns show less syncretism than agreement markers?

- Considering the abundance of different syncretism patterns, is syncretism a fact to be explained, or are partitions (Harbour 2016)?

- How can the attested and unattested syncretisms or partitions in pronominal paradigms be explained?

- Which morphological compositions are possible in language and which are not?

- Can the last two questions raised above be explained by (universal) person and number hierarchies?

Many of the issues raised in analyses of pronominals relate directly to person whereas others relate only to number, as in the questions below:

- Is the inclusive a combination of first and second person or is it an extra distinction on top of first person?

- Why is third person so often different from the other persons, for example by taking different number marking than the other persons or by being syncretic with demonstratives?

- Why do certain languages show person distinctions in their demonstratives and what are the differences and similarities between personal pronouns and demonstratives (a.o. Imai 2003; Gruber 2013; Harbour 2016)?

- Is there a difference between number marking on nouns and number marking in pronominal elements?

- Does pronominal number make a distinction between minimal-augmented and singular-plural number systems or does it only make use of one number distinction, and how can this be derived by morphosyntactic number features?

- Is singular the default number (i.e. lacking a feature specification), as for example Ackema & Neeleman (2017) suggest based on morphology, or is plural the default number, as argued for by Sauerland (2008) based on semantics, or do both singular and plural have a feature specification, (e.g. Bobaljik 2008).

Semantic questions include the following:

- Is there a one-to-one relation between semantic and morphosyntactic person and number features as suggested in e.g. Harbour (2016), or do these differ, as hinted at by Zeijlstra (2015); Sauerland (2008)?

- Do the morphosyntactic person features refer to operations such as function application (e.g. Ackema & Neeleman 2017; Harbour 2016) or do they correspond to predicates (e.g. Harley & Ritter 2002)?

- Is there a different semantics for number features on pronominals and on nominals, even in cases where they are morphosyntactically similar?

**Invited Speakers**

- Matthew Baerman (University of Surrey)

- Daniel Harbour (Queen Mary University of London)

- Martina Wiltschko (UBC, Vancouver)

**Abstract Guidelines**

Abstracts should not exceed two pages, including data, references and diagrams. Abstracts should be typed in at least 11-point font, with one-inch margins (letter-size; 8.5 inch by 11 inch or A4) and a maximum of 50 lines of text per page. Abstracts must be anonymous and submissions are limited to 2 per author, at least one of which is co-authored. Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Please submit your abstract using the EasyChair link for BCGL10: `https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=bcgl10personandnumbe`

**Important Dates**

- First call for papers: June 1, 2017

- Second call for papers: August 16, 2017

- Abstract submission deadline: September 15, 2017

- Notification of acceptance: October 16, 2017

- Conference: December 4-5, 2017

**Conference location**

CRISSP - KU Leuven Brussels Campus
Stormstaat 2
1000 Brussels
Belgium

`http://www.crissp.be`

# References

Ackema, Peter & Ad Neeleman. 2017. *Features of person*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Baerman, Matthew, Dunstan Brown & Greville G. Corbett. 2005. *The syntax–morphology interface*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bobaljik, Jonathan D. 2008. Missing persons. *The Linguistic Review* 25. 203–230.

Corbett, Greville G. 2000. *Number*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cysouw, Michael. 2003. *The paradigmatic structure of person marking*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Daniel, Michael. 2005. Understanding inclusives. In Elena Filimonova (ed.), *Clusivity typology and case studies of clusivity: Typology and case studies of the the inclusive–exclusive distinction*, 3–48. John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Forchheimer, Paul. 1953. *The category of person in language*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.

Gruber, Bettina. 2013. *The spatiotamporal dimensions of person: A morphosyntactic account of indexical pronouns*. Utrecht: Universiteit Utrecht LOT dissertation.

Harbour, Daniel. 2016. *Impossible persons*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Harley, Heidi & Elizabeth Ritter. 2002. Person and number in pronouns: A feature-geometric analysis. *Language* 78(3). 482–526.

Imai, Shingo. 2003. *Spatial deixis*. Buffalo: State University of New York dissertation.

Moskal, Beata. 2014. The role of morphological markedness in inclusive/exclusive pronouns. In *Annual meeting of the berkeley linguistics society*, 354–368. http://journals.linguisticsociety.org/proceedings/index.php/BLS/article/view/3148/2867.

Nichols, Johanna & David A. Peterson. 2013. *M-T pronouns* chap. 136. Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

Sauerland, Uli. 2008. On the semantic markedness of phi-features. In Daniel Harbour, David Adger & Susanna Béjar (eds.), *Phi theory: Phi-features across modules and interfaces*, 57–82. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Siewierska, Anna. 2004. *Person* Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Silverstein, Michael. 1976. *Hierarchy of features and ergativity* 112–171. Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Smith, Peter W., Beata Moskal, Ting Xu, Jungmin Kang & Jonathan David Bobaljik. 2016. Case and number suppletion in pronouns .

Zeijlstra, Hedde. 2015. Let's talk about you and me. *Journal of Linguistics* 51(2). 456–500.

Zwicky, Arnold. 1977. Hierarchies of person. *Chicago Linguistics Society* 13. 714–733.