



small languages big ideas

the smaller Germanic languages from a
theoretical, general and comparative perspective

Zürich, 4-5 April 2019

Context

Zürich offers a broad spectrum of Germanic philologies. Apart from English and German, Dutch and Scandinavian studies are each offered as individual study tracks, and, furthermore, Frisian, Luxembourgish, Afrikaans, and Germanic dialects and contact languages are part of the Comparative Germanic Linguistics study track.

What is the intrinsic value of these smaller languages and varieties, and their respective linguistics for the general and comparative linguistics field? In this congress, we will introduce several linguistic disciplines as seen from different smaller Germanic languages and exchange knowledge as well as opinions on the value of the study of these languages to linguistic theory.

The motivation stems from the fact that these well-established but sometimes lesser known philologies of smaller Germanic languages and dialects promise as much theoretical insight as those of bigger languages (such as English) or smaller, exotic languages (Pacific, Native American, etc.) that have not the same in-depth descriptive tradition as 'local' Germanic languages. This may not be a contested opinion necessarily, but it is however a good idea that well described and data-rich linguistic systems such as these are brought back into the focus of general linguistics and linguistic theory.

Six plenary talks will be held by experts on different Germanic languages who will focus on one or more languages, but who are also skilled in the study of several other overlapping philologies, hence stimulating discussion rather than parallel one-way knowledge transfer. Further talks will be held by junior and senior researchers in the Germanic linguistics fields, featuring a whole range of Germanic languages and regional varieties.

Registering

If you want to visit the congress in the audience, you may still register via the registration form on our congress website:

http://www.ds.uzh.ch/de/tagungen/small_languages_big_ideas.



Partners

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Kind regards and see you in Zürich!

The organising committee,

Dr. Chris De Wulf – Prof. Dr. Elvira Glaser – Jonas Keller, MA – Dr. des. Kevin Müller



PROGRAMME

Locations: RAA-G-01 and RAA-G-15, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich

DAY 1: Thursday, April 4th, 2019

13:30 Arrival and coffee

14:00 Opening & Welcome word by the ambassadors of the Netherlands, Luxemburg and Belgium, H.E. Ms. A. Luwema, H.E. Mr. J.-C. Meyer and H.E. Mr. W. De Buck

Plenary session part 1	
Room	RAA-G-01
14:15	<i>Loss of inflection in North Germanic adjectives – or is it?</i> (Hans-Olav Enger – University of Oslo, in cooperation with Helen Sims-Williams)
15:00	<i>Luxembourgish</i> (Antje Dammel – Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)

15:45 Coffee break

Plenary session part 2	
Room	RAA-G-01
16:15	<i>The complementizer system of Modern West Frisian</i> (Jarich Hoekstra – Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel)
17:00	<i>Pennsylvania Dutch in the 21st Century</i> (Mark Loudon – University of Wisconsin-Madison)

17:45 Preliminary final words of the day

18:15 Reception



DAY 2: Friday, April 5th, 2019

08:30 Arrival with coffee

09:00 Welcome word

Plenary session part 3	
Room	RAA-G-01
09:15	<i>The loss of grammatical gender in Afrikaans – simplification in action</i> (Wannie Carstens – North-West University Potchefstroom)
10:00	<i>Habitual do+infinitive construction in Heerlen Dutch: how actors breach syntactic restrictions through language play</i> (Leonie Cornips – Maastricht University & Meertens Instituut Amsterdam)

10:45 Coffee break

Parallel sessions part 1		
Room	RAA-G-01	RAA-G-15
11:15	<i>The semantic concept of Old Icelandic Lesa</i> (Kevin Müller, University of Zürich)	<i>The earliest written Afrikaans – What can we learn from Abu Bakr Effendi?</i> (Jonas Keller, University of Zürich)
11:45	<i>Frisia Dialects in the Middle Ages</i> (Christoph Hössel, University of Zürich)	<i>The Labovian Carousel – A good fit for all sorts of Dutch</i> (Chris De Wulf, University of Zürich)

There will be time between lectures to switch rooms

12:15 Lunch break

Parallel sessions part 2		
Room	RAA-G-01	RAA-G-15
14:00	<i>Yiddish as a Germanic language. Findings from the Project “Syntax of Eastern Yiddish Dialects (SEYD)”</i> (Lea Schäfer, Heinrich-Heine Universität Düsseldorf)	<i>German-Namibians and their Digital Speech Acts: The (Re-)Negotiation between Smaller and Bigger German(ic) Varieties</i> (Henning Radke, Duitsland Instituut Amsterdam)
14:30	<i>Loanwords and native synonyms in Old and Middle Icelandic: preliminary results</i> (Matteo Tarsi, University of Iceland)	<i>Case systems of the Alto-Adige region</i> (Anne Kruijt, Università di Verona)
15:00	<i>‘Ik spreek geen Fries’ – ‘Mar kinsto ferstean?’ Receptive multilingualism in Fryslân</i> (Guillem Belmar & Sara Pinho, University of Groningen)	<i>Two grammars, one speaker: the case of Low German verbal clusters</i> (Marie Schnieders & Anke Schippers, University of Oldenburg)
15:30	<i>What can we learn from Unserdeutsch? Insights for Germanic linguistics and linguistic theory</i> (Péter Maitz & Siegwalt Lindenfelser, University of Bern)	<i>New ways to see the wood for the trees in Afrikaans syntax</i> (Peter Dirix & Liesbeth Augustinus, KU Leuven)

There will be time between lectures to switch rooms

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 Round table discussion

17:30 Conclusions and closing words

18:00 Dinner with active participants