Grammatical gender in Luxemburgish - small language, big issue

Luxemburgish is peculiar with respect to grammatical gender in several respects. This talk presents three cases of peculiar behaviour:

- the role of gender in the nominal system with special regard to number allomorphy and differences in productivity between the three genders
- the preservation of base gender in diminutives (den Auto - den Autochen) with diminutive suffixes behaving as non-heads
- the development of a third person respect distinction in the feminine singular slot of personal pronoun paradigms (hatt vs. si).

The discussion focusses on the theoretical implications of these peculiarities and on the question to what extent they are linked to the status of Luxemburgish as a „small language“.

References (selection)