Beyond *Formenlehre*

Indo-European Morphology with fuzzy boundaries and interface phenomena

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1 Topic

The 16th Fachtagung of the Society for Indo-European Studies, entitled "Beyond *Formenlehre*? Indo-European Morphology with fuzzy boundaries and interface phenomena", will be held from September 7 until September 10 2019 at the University of Zurich.

Investigations into the morphology of Indo-European languages and its reconstruction are one of the main foci of research in Indo-European Studies. The reconstruction of inflectional paradigms and derivational structures has enjoyed exceptional success via the Comparative Method: In comparison with other language families, the inventory of linguistic forms in ancient and medieval Indo-European languages has received a very high level of attention in scholarship. As such, the morphology of Proto-Indo-European can be reconstructed with a precision higher than any other proto-language.

The focus on description and reconstruction of single elements in derivation and inflection and the associated systemic features has, however, led to a neglect of several fields and processes within the sphere of morphology. The latter has been often treated as a self-contained and closed subsystem of the language. But if morphology has to be understood as the "grammar of words" (as per Booij 2012), it becomes clear that it must be contextualized within the grammatical apparatus of language as such. Recent work on wordhood rejects the notion of word wholesale (cf. the conclusions in Haspelmath 2018) or describes morphology as part of syntax (as within the theoretical framework of Distributed Morphology for which see Embick and Noyer 2007). Independently, Indo-European studies have witnessed a growing awareness of the importance of processes like univerbation in single languages (cf. Opfermann 2016 for Latin), and morphosyntactic factors are incorporated in large-scale models of reconstruction (Willi 2018).

The *Fachtagung* ties in with these recent developments and offers a platform for contributions on fuzzy boundaries and interface phenomena within morphology and adjacent areas of grammar. Along with work that deals with the problematic nature of the concept "word" as a grammatical unit and its alignment with phonological domains (cf. Bergmann 2018 for an overview and research on German), we especially invite submissions concerning issues of classification and blurred divides, be it within morphology itself, or in its margins. As an example of the former, segmentation issues and investigations regarding the relationship between inflection and derivation can be mentioned. The latter is exemplified by clitics as the "morphology of phrases" (see Anderson 2005) and similar concepts. Here we see the opportunity to continue the Indo-Europeanist tradition of trailblazing investigations like Wackernagel 1892 and Jacobsohn 1920. In addition to typological and descriptive approaches, theoretical approaches with a modular understanding of interfaces as far as they can claim explanatory force within this domain can be implemented for Indo-European studies as well.

Last but not least, methodological reflections on traditional concepts which are compatible with the framework of the conference (e.g. ablaut-theories or *Auslautgesetze*) or modeling thereof are also welcome.

2 Organization

As the conference aims at a representative and diversified interpretation of the conference topic and its various possibilities of application, the organizers decided to advertise four slots for thematic session, which will focus on different approaches and aspects. As these sessions are meant to foster communication and encourage dialog within Indo-European studies, they will feature not only a keynote speaker but also a discussant. Introductions by the organizers of the sessions will offer an overview on the subject and research in the field for the non-specialists.

The organizers invite session proposals until July 1 (to fachtagung2020@ivs.uzh.ch). The proposals must contain the title, a short sketch of the topic's importance and relevance to current research, situated within the larger scope of the conference, as well as the names of the keynote speakers with a provisional topic for their talks and the names of the discussants. All proposals will be reviewed by members of the conference board and evaluated by the organizers to ensure a well-balanced program. Decisions regarding acceptance or rejection will be communicated by September 1. The costs for traveling and lodging incurred by keynote speakers and discussants will be covered by the organization.

A second letter on September 9 will include a list of the thematic sections and a call for papers for all contributions. Besides the thematic sessions a general session will comprise all papers dealing with aspects of the conference topic not addressed by the former.

As usual, the working languages of the conference will be French, German, and English.

References

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