

Report on YYC Pronouns 2019
For the Canadian Linguistics Association

Workshop website: <https://sites.google.com/view/yycpronouns2019calgary/home>

The Division of Linguistics, School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures at the University of Calgary is grateful for the support we received from the Canadian Linguistics Association for YYC Pronouns 2019. This is the latest in a series of syntax workshops hosted by syntacticians in a Canadian university approximately every two years, focusing on some aspect of the syntax of nominals. The \$400 we received from the CLA was used to pay a graduate assistant who served as co-organizer of the event, along with Drs. Dennis Storoshenko and Elizabeth (Betsy) Ritter.

Our event consisted of two events – a public lecture for the broader Calgary community and an academic workshop for syntacticians.

The public lecture “Formalizing Pronouns” by Dr. Kirby Conrod (University of Washington) explored the changing face of the pronoun *they* in English, the various ways in which pronouns are used to construct identity, and how the manipulation of pronouns such as so-called definite singular *they* can be reconciled with formal treatments of pronouns. This event was organized in partnership with the Calgary Public Library and held at the new Central Library on November 14th, 2019

The academic workshop on the topic of pronouns was held at the University of Calgary on November 15-16th, 2019. This was the latest in a workshop series that has been bringing together syntacticians from across Canada since 2005. Building on the tradition of prior workshops, we invited faculty, postdocs and graduate students from Canadian universities who share a theoretical approach and an interest in the structure, distribution and interpretation of pronouns, as well as leading researchers specializing in this topic from outside Canada. The workshop consisted of 2 keynote addresses by international figures who have made major contributions to our understanding of the grammatical properties of pronouns, 17 invited talks by scholars from other Canadian universities and 4 talks by University of Calgary faculty and students. Our invitees spanned the academic ranks, including 3 Assistant Professors, 8 Associate Professors and 6 Full or Emeritus Professors. Additionally, we invited 5 presenters from the graduate student or Post-doctoral ranks. Our invitees came from Victoria in the west to Halifax in the east, representing a total of 12 different linguistics programs in Canada. Given the importance of these workshops for the development of professional networks within Canada, the inclusion of early-career scholars was given high priority. The subject matter of the presentations represents a broad range of research, encompassing laboratory-based psycholinguistic work on pronouns in English to more traditional fieldwork examinations of less-studied languages such as Chuj (Guatemala).

The format of the event – with 45 minutes allotted for regular talks, and a workshop dinner – provided many opportunities for discussion and networking. We look forward to the next workshop (location tbd) and hope that host institution also receives the support of the CLA.

Betsy Ritter
December 17, 2019