

## "Focus alternatives: Theoretical and empirical perspectives"

Location: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Dates: February 27-28, 2020

Submission deadline: October 31, 2019

Ever since the seminal work by Mats Rooth, starting with his PhD thesis in 1985, the idea that alternatives are relevant to the interpretation of focused constituents in language has been very influential in semantic theories as well as other areas in the language sciences. About a decade ago, psycholinguists started studying whether focus alternatives for a focused constituent are processed differently from semantic objects (e.g. referents, predicates) that are not focus alternatives. Still, there is a divide between semanticists and psycholinguists such that on the one hand, psycholinguists often reduce complex semantic theories to experimentally testable snippets that do not do justice to the original theory, and on the other hand, semanticists often do not seem to be particularly interested in the finer points of behavioural reflexes of the alternative status such as faster recognition times or stronger memory traces.

The aim of the present workshop is to bring together theoreticians and experimentalists, to learn about the concepts and methods that both sides use when investigating focus alternatives and, ideally, discuss whether and how closer collaboration on these questions might lead to novel insights by conducting experiments that are better grounded in theory and by developing improved theories that are based on a diversity of empirical observations.

The workshop is organised with support from the ERC starting grant "Focus alternatives in the human mind: Retrieval, representation and recall" awarded to Katharina Spalek.

### INVITED SPEAKERS:

Bettina Braun, Universität Konstanz

Daniel Büring, Universität Wien

### 1st CALL FOR PAPERS:

Abstracts are invited for 20-minute talks or posters. Contributions may be related to semantic theories for focus that work with the notion of alternatives or empirical studies testing questions about behavioural or neurobiological reflexes of focus alternatives during human language processing. Corpus studies on focus alternatives are also welcome.

Abstracts should be limited to a maximum of two pages, including examples, figures, tables and references. Pages should be A4 or US letter with one inch margins and a minimum font size of 11pt. Abstracts can be submitted via EasyChair at <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=fatep2020>

Abstract submission deadline: October 31, 2019

Notification: mid-December 2019