GUEST EDITORS' NOTE

The underlying motivation for this special issue of *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* came from the rather traditional recognition that, in languages that have a rich morphological structure, morphology certainly plays a crucial role in processing decisions. Morphology can be decisive in *packaging word units into syntactically organized phrases.* For an illustration from a language where surface constituency does not help a listener in relating parts of the sentence that belong together, take a Latin example:

> Humano   capiti   cervicem pictor equinam iungere si velit...
> human.dat head.dat neck.acc painter horse.acc to paint if wanted
> 'If the painter wanted to paint a human head to a horse neck...'

In the opening sentence of Horace's *Ars poetica*, the imaginary Latin speaker packages 'neck' (*cervicem*) and 'horse' (*equinam*) together on the basis of accusative and number agreement.

Morphology is also central in the assignment of syntactic roles—thematic roles, if you like—to phrases. To continue in the above vein (and to promote a long-missed psycholinguistics of Latin), *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur* 'By changing the names the story is narrated about you,' says Horatius. With the passive verb *narratur* a nominative theme is found based on its ending (*fabula*) and the decision about the role of the adjuncts is based on the ablative (*de te*) and instrumental (*nomine*) endings.

When approaching our colleagues, our primary aim was not to revitalize Latin psycholinguistics. Rather, the intention was get a collection of papers on the role of morphology in processing words and in decisions concerning sentences in languages that are structurally and historically unrelated or rather different, but are also similar in that all have a relatively rich morphology.

Of the eight papers of this double issue, six concern Finno-Ugric languages (five of them Hungarian, one Finnish), and two concern Slavic

languages. The authors used a varied battery of present-day psycholinguistic methods to reveal the importance of morphology in language processing, such as memory recall as a function of morphology (Németh et al., Pléh et al.), grammaticality judgments (Lukács et al., Mészáros) eye movements (Palmovic et al., Vainio et al.), elicited production in a wug-test and modelling (Milin et al.). The populations are also varied covering university students, typically developing children of different ages, children with language impairment and patients with aphasia.

The guest editors and the authors hope that this volume would contribute to the increasing target language variability of experimental psycholinguistics, as well as to the stabilization of the interest towards morphology in how language is processed, acquired and represented in the mind and brain.

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Csaba Pléh and Ágnes Lukács