

## **Cognitive attractors in language processing? Evidence from neurotypology**

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Language, as a singularly human ability, is intimately tied to the structure of human cognition and constrained by the organising principles of neurobiology. It thus appears likely that fundamental architectural characteristics of language reflect more general cognitive and biological principles. In this context, Evans and Levinson (2009) proposed that "cognitive attractors" could serve as one source of competing motivations in language. This talk will review a recent experimental approach, entitled "neurotypology", which is suited to identifying attractor categories of this type. By comparing and contrasting neurophysiological processing signatures for typologically diverse languages, neurotypological research aims to establish cross-linguistic generalisations in the neurocognition of language as well as to identify dimensions of variation. The generalisations identified in this way are promising candidates for cognitive attractors, which serve to shape the structure of language(s) / language processing on the one hand and provide a new perspective on the structure of human cognition on the other. This proposal will be illustrated with reference to one such potential attractor, the notion of "actorhood".