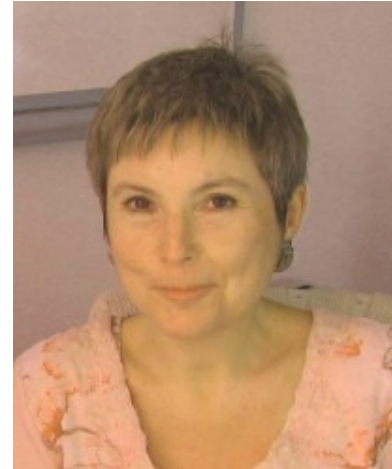


Professor Anna Siewierska

Professor of Linguistics and Human Communication

Degree: BA (Hons), MA, PhD (Melbourne). Habilitation (Gdansk)

Associated research centres and groups: [Language Variation and Linguistic Theory \(LVLTL\)](#), [Theoretical Linguistics \(RITL\)](#)



Current Teaching

This year I will be teaching: the grammar part of LING 152, LING 202, (in term 1), LING 313 (together with Willem Hollmann and Paul Kerswill) . In addition I will be supervising or co-supervising 12 Ph.D students.

Research Interests

I have been Professor of Linguistics and Human Communication in the department since 1994. Earlier I was a senior research fellow in the Department of General Linguistics at the University of Amsterdam, and prior to that a lecturer in the Department of English at Gdansk University (Poland). I have also taught in the Department of Linguistics at Monash University, Melbourne (Australia) where I completed my undergraduate studies and did my MA and Ph.D.

My major research interests are language typology, the comparison of different theoretical frameworks, diachronic change, discourse pragmatics and the morpho-syntax of English dialects. Recently I have also become interested in the affects of long standing wide-spread literacy on grammar. My typological work has centred on various aspects of clause structure, grammatical relations, case and agreement marking, word order, valency changing operations and pragmatic functions. Although I have done comparative work on a number of models of grammar, I am primarily interested in functional-cognitive models, and especially usage based approaches. My interest in English dialects is focused on Lancashire dialect which I am investigating together with Willem Hollmann. Our interest lies not solely in the description of the dialect but also in how dialectal data may be seen to bear on linguistic theory and the nature of the methods that are required to elicit different types of dialectal data. As for my more recent interest, i.e. in the affects of literacy on grammatical structure, I am investigating the issue from a number of perspectives, diachronic (with respect to various stages of the major standard European languages), dialectal (comparing standard and nonstandard varieties of the same language), and cross-linguistic (comparing languages with and without a written tradition).

In the early 90-ties I was the coordinator of the word order group of the European Science Foundation Eurotyp project dealing with the typology of the languages of Europe. More recently I have been involved in the World Atlas of Linguistic Structures project designed by the Max Planck Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig

and the EC- funded Linguistic Typology Resource Centre project based in Utrecht . Over the last fifteen years I have developed in cooperation with [Dik Bakker](#) from the University of Amsterdam an extensive computerized database on pronominal systems, person agreement, case marking and word order. Information on person agreement and personal pronouns for well over 450 languages is now available [here](#) . I have presented some of the results of my analyses of the data in a monograph entitled *Person* published in 2004 by CUP in the red series (see [comprehensive bibliography](#)) . While I continue to be interested in person and person systems, I am also working on impersonal constructions. In 2008 I edited a special issue of the Transactions of the Philological Society on impersonal constructions and am expecting the book entitled "Towards a Typology of Impersonal Constructions" co-edited with Andrej Malchukov from the Max Planck Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig to come out in John Benjamins in a month or so. My interest in impersonal constructions has also resulted in my re-visiting a previous research topic, namely the passive. I have spent quite some time investigating the different sources of passive constructions, especially the development of passives from 3pl impersonals and more recently the causative-passive diachronic pathway, particularly in Sinitic and other South-East Asian languages.

In September 2009 I embarked on a new project Referential Hierarchies in Morpho-Syntax www.rhim.uni-koeln.de funded by the ESF-Babel initiative together with the AHRC. This is a three year collaborative project, with partners in Germany, Switzerland and the US) aimed at investigating aspects of syntax characteristically found in endangered languages. We are investigating morphosyntactic systems that are based on a hierarchy of referents -first and second person ranking over third, humans over non-humans, and known referents over unknown ones. My part of the project which I am working on together with Eva van Lier (formerly from the University of Amsterdam) is devoted to ditransitive constructions. Eva and I have had a series of presentations of the first results of our project at various conferences, including the 43rd meeting of the SLE in Vilno, The Syntax of the World's Conference in Lyon in September 2010. In May this year we are having an international workshop on hierarchical effects on three participant constructions in Lancaster. My full list of publications is available [here](#).

Many of them, including my 1984 book on the passive, are in PDF format and can be downloaded.

At Lancaster University I have held various functions. Between 2005-2008 I was head of department. I have also been a member of the University Council, Court, the University Nominations Committee, the University Grievance Committee, The Faculty of Social Science Chairs and Readers Committee, the Departmental Coordinator of Postgraduate Teaching, The Departmental Coordinator of Undergraduate Teaching. Currently I am the coordinator of external relations in the department, which means that I deal with the visiting academics and students to our department and coordinate the external programmes that we have in Hong Kong and Shanghai and the Erasmus agreements.

Potential Doctoral Proposals

I am very interested in supervising Ph.D level work in the areas of language variation and change. I am especially keen to supervise work in linguistic typology, dialect morpho-syntax, comparative studies of English and other languages especially in the areas of pronominal usage, voice, impersonal constructions, word order, definiteness and tense and aspect. I have also become interested in lexical change. Another topic

that I would like to work with doctoral students on is how wide-spread literacy affects grammar. This is a topic which may be considered from a diachronic perspective in relation to different historical stages of the major standard European languages, or from a dialectal perspective or a cross-linguistic perspective, i.e. by means of comparing languages with and without a written tradition.

Recent publications

Siewierska, A & Maria Papastathi (2011). Third person plurals in the languages of Europe: typological and methodological issues. *Linguistics*. 43.2: 575-610.

Siewierska, A., J. Xu & R. Xia (in 2010) *Bang-le yi ge da mang* (offered a big helping hand) A corpus study of the splittable compounds in spoken and written Chinese. *Language Sciences* 32.

Siewierska, A. (2010) From 3ptl-to passive: incipient, emergent and established passives. *Diachronica* 27.3: 73-109.

Siewierska, A. (2010). Person forms. In Jae Jung Song (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Typology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 322-343.

Siewierska, A. (2010) Implicational universals. In Patrick Colm Hogan. (ed.), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 279-381

D. Bakker and A. Siewierska (2009). Weighing the semantic distinctions in person forms. In. Johannes Helmbrecht, Yoko Nishina, Yong Min Shin, Stavros Skopeteas and Elizabeth Verhoeven (eds), *Form and Function in Language Research. Papers in Honour of Christian Lehmann*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 25-56.

Siewierska, A. (2009). Person asymmetries in zero expression and grammatical function. In F. Floricic (ed.), *Essais de Linguistique Generale et de Typologie Linguistique offerts au Professeur Denis Creissels à l'occasion de ses 65 ans*. Paris: Presses de L'Ecole Normale Supérieure, 425-438.

Siewierska, A. (2009) Semantics. Culpeper, J., Katamba, F. Kerswill, P., Wodak, R. and T. McEnery *English Language: Description, Variation and Context*. Houndmills: Palgrave, 186-201.

Siewierska A. & D. Bakker (2009). Case and alternative strategies. In. A. M. Malchukov & A. Spencer (eds), *Handbook of Case*: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 290-303.

Siewierska, A. (ed), (2008) . *Transactions of the Philological Society*. Special issue Impersonal Constructions in Grammatical Theory. 106.2: 1-2.

Siewierska, A. (2008) Introduction: impersonalization from a subject-centered vs. agent-centered perspective. *Transactions of the Philological Society*. Special issue Impersonal Constructions in Grammatical Theory. 106.2: 1-23.

Siewierska, A. (2008) Ways of impersonalizing: pronominal vs. verbal strategies. In María de los Angeles Gómez- González, Lachlan Mackenzie and Elsa M. González Álvarez (eds), *Current Trends in Contrastive Linguistics*, Amsterdam John Benjamins. 3-26.

Eprints Publications Repository and Bibliographic Database

Anna Siewierska has [58 selected publication](#) records listed on this webpage. Use links to access abstracts and full text where available. [View all records](#) to sort by date, type and title. For all ePrints records go to <http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk>

Siewierska, Anna and Xu, Jiajin and Xiao, Richard (2010) [Bang-le yi ge da mang \(offered a big helping hand\) : A corpus study of the splittable compounds in spoken and written Chinese](#). Language Sciences, 32 (4). pp. 464-487. ISSN 0388-0001

Siewierska, Anna (2010) [From 3ptl-to passive : incipient, emergent and established passives](#). Diachronica: International Journal for Historical Linguistics, 27 (1). pp. 73-109. ISSN 0176-4225

Siewierska, Anna (2010) [Person forms](#). In: The Oxford handbook of linguistic typology. Oxford University Press, Oxford. ISBN 9780199281251

Siewierska, Anna (2009) [Person asymmetries in zero expression and grammatical function](#). Essais de Linguistique Generale et de Typologie Linguistique offerts au Professeur Denis Creissels à l'occasion de ses 65 ans.. pp. 425-438.

Siewierska, Anna (2009) [Semantics](#). In: English Language, Description, Variation and Context. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke, pp. 186-201. ISBN 9781403945907

Bakker, Dik and Siewierska, Anna (2009) [Weighing the semantic distinctions in person forms](#). In: Form and function in language research : papers in honour of Christian Lehmann. Trends in Linguistics . Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 25-56. ISBN 9783110216127

Siewierska, Anna and Bakker, D. (2008) [Case and alternative strategies : word order and agreement marking](#). In: The Oxford Handbook of Case. Oxford University Press, Oxford. ISBN 978-0199206476

Siewierska, Anna (2008) [INTRODUCTION: IMPERSONALIZATION FROM A SUBJECT-CENTRED VS. AGENT-CENTRED PERSPECTIVE](#). Transactions of the Philological Society, 106 (2). pp. 1-23.

Siewierska, Anna (2008) [Impersonal Constructions in Grammatical Theory](#). Transactions of the Philological Society, 106 (2). Blackwell Publishing, London.

Siewierska, Anna (2008) [Ways of impersonalizing](#). In: Current Trends in Contrastive Linguistics. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 3-26.

Other Interests and Hobbies

I like reading, walking , listening to music and entertaining. I also like playing bridge but haven't managed to do so for quite a while.

Associated Keywords: [Agency](#), [Cognitive linguistics](#), [Corpora of nonstandard languages](#), [Dialectology](#), [English](#), [Historical and diachronic corpora](#), [History of English](#), [Impersonality](#), [Language](#), [Language change](#), [Language typology](#), [Language variation and change](#), [Linguistic ethnography](#), [Linguistics](#), [Linguistic typology](#), [Literacy](#), [Second language acquisition](#), [Semantics](#), [Spoken language corpora](#), [Syntax](#), [Syntax/discourse interface](#)